DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 459 498 CS 510 716

TITLE	Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (84th, Washington, DC, August 5-8, 2001). Magazine Division.
INSTITUTION	Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.
PUB DATE	2001-08-00
NOTE	92p.; For other sections of the 2001 proceedings, see CS 510 704-724.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Content Analysis; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Ideology; *Journalism Education; *Periodicals; *Racial Distribution; *Unions
IDENTIFIERS	Fashion Magazines; Literary Journalism; *Media Coverage; Netherlands; New Yorker; North American Free Trade Agreement

ABSTRACT

The Magazine section of the proceedings contains the following 4 selected papers: "Racial Cover-Up, 1996-2000: Who Is the Face on Today's Fashion Magazine?" (Lindsey Kressin); "Reporter at Large: Morris Markey's Literary Journalism in 'The New Yorker'" (Les Sillars); "Art, Ideology and Americanisation in Post-War Dutch Journalism" (Hans Renders); and "Union Magazines' Coverage of the NAFTA Controversy before Congressional Approval" (Eric Freedman). (RS)

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Racial Cover-up 1996-2000: Who Is the Face on Today's Fashion Magazine?

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1st Place Undergraduate Research Paper
Magazine Division
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication

Washington, D.C.
August 2001

INTRODUCTION

Surviving the advent of the feminist movement and the cultural pursuit of racial and gender equality, fashion magazines-- as a genre-- have transcended the social effects of these controversial issues to become a staple of American society for more than a hundred years. Since their conception in the latter part of the nineteenth century, women's magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* (1886), *Vogue* (1892), and *Glamour* (1939) have developed a running social commentary on life's ever-evolving sense of beauty and style. According to feminist author Naomi Wolf, women's magazines have historically been an impetus for change, instigating revolution within the realm of female self-perception. In her book, *The Beauty Myth*, Wolf writes:

> Women's magazines for over a century have been one of the most powerful agents for changing women's roles, and throughout that time-- today more than ever-- they have consistently glamorized whatever the economy, their advertisers, and, during wartime, the government, needed at that moment from women.[1]

Publishing monthly advice on fashion trends, beauty fads, and relationship taboos, the contemporary versions of *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour* continue to project fanciful physical standards impossible for today's woman to emulate. As *Vogue*'s editor-in-chief, Anna Wintour, appropriately confesses, "Fashion magazines play upon our fantasies of beauty, glamour, and even power."[2] With an emphasis on cleavage, facial beauty, and glamour reflected in their choice of cover images, fashion magazines affect society's perception of what is and what is not considered to be beautiful.

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[1] Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991), 64.

[2] Anna Wintour, "Letter From the Editor: No Ordinary Oprah," *Vogue* (October 1998), 76.

Deliberately focusing attention on the body, fashion magazines induce a self-conscious paranoia in the female consumer's idea of self-worth, promoting a yardstick of beauty that "women scan as anxiously as men scan stock reports."[3] It is because of this media empowerment that it becomes necessary to analyze the type of visual image which is being perpetuated, and, explicitly, the association that has developed between beauty and race. The purpose of this paper is to investigate racial diversity through the covers of three popular fashion magazines-- *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour*-- over a five-year period. Specifically, the focus of the paper revolves around the frequency of black and white models appearing on the covers of the three selected magazines.

BACKGROUND

No feature is as important to a magazine as its cover. According to Sammye Johnson and Patricia Prijatel, authors of *The Magazine From Cover to Cover*, the cover of a magazine "creates the all-important first impression," luring the reader into the magazine's content.[4] Moreover, serving a utilitarian purpose, a successful cover: establishes the personality of the magazine, grabs the reader's attention, and maintains consistency with previous issues through easily identifiable characteristics.[5] Within the magazine industry, it is the predominant philosophy that effective covers are achieved through a "simple competitive, poster-like and eye-catching" style indicative of the

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[3] Wolf, 67.

[4] Sammye Johnson and Patricia Prijatel, *The Magazine From Cover to Cover: Inside a Dynamic Industry* (Chicago: NTC Publishing Group, 1999), 240.

[5] Ibid., 240-241.

issue's major theme while still expressive of the magazine's original editorial mission.[6] Since cover images are the most readily associated feature of a magazine, the greatest amount of detail and emphasis is always placed upon their selection and design.[7]

Fashion Magazines

In 1987, the United Nations released a statement charging that the images of women in the media were among the preeminent obstacles to eradicating discrimination against women.[8] Over a decade later, it is still an undeniable reality that fashion magazines present the female cover model as a sexual object, utilizing camera angles to emphasize such subjective attributes as the face, cleavage, midriff, and legs.[9] And why? The key to marketing fashion is to sell sex. Simply compare the sharp pictorial contrast between the images of women in popular news magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek* with those gracing the covers of the three selected magazines. Fashion magazines emphasize the characteristically suggestive physical attributes of beautiful women: cleavage, midriff, and legs. Fantasy. Unattainable perfection. The epitome of "beauty" is the editorial philosophy motivating the selection of cover images for *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour*.

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[6] Sammye Johnson and William G. Christ, "The Representation of Women: The News Magazine Cover as an International Cultural Artifact," in *Silent Voices*, eds. Doug A. Newsom and Bob J. Carrell (New York: University of America Press, 1995), 216.

[7] Ibid., 216.

[8] Cythnia M. Lont, ed. *Women and Media: Content, Career, and Criticism* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1995), 144.

[9] Lillie M. Fears, "Comparing Portrayal of Women in Black and White Magazines," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, D.C., August 1995.

Cosmopolitan

While at the helm of *Cosmopolitan* from 1965 until March 1997, Helen Gurley Brown decreed that the "Cosmopolitan girl" should "work hard to change herself to interest men."[10] The covers were designed from the perspective that women were "social, career, and sexual actors."[11] As such, this philosophy translated into racy cover images, emphasizing the abundance or vast exposure of the model's cleavage. Brown once said of her cover approach, "We try to select the prettiest women in the world . . . looking for hair, cleavage, . . . and bare skin."[12]

Then, in 1997, under the leadership of new editor Bonnie Fuller, *Cosmopolitan* contemporized its "provocative and titillating and sexy" formula by updating the "Cosmo girl" image.[13] Now, the Cosmo girl was a "fun fearless female." Significantly, there occurred a noticeable increase in the number of celebrity models as well as the degree of cleavage exposure appearing on *Cosmopolitan*'s magazine cover. At the time, Fuller commented:

> I always believed in the *Cosmopolitan* philosophy. I felt that it was empowering, and realistic, to encourage women to go after all their goals, to be the best and reach for the stars in their careers, their relationships, in bed, whatever. I never thought that was out of date.[14]

Feminist critics attacked Fuller's modernized image as an enemy in the fight for gender equality, characterizing *Cosmopolitan* as sex-obsessed, appealing to the lowest

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[10] Kathleen L. Endres and Therese L. Lueck, eds., *Women's Periodicals in the United States: Consumer Magazines* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), 53.

[11] Ibid., 53.

[12] Ibid., 54.

[13] Tony Case, "Fearless Female Takes Over From 'Cosmo Girl,'" *Advertising Age* (Oct. 27, 1997), s26.

[14] Ibid., s26.

common denominator, and "trashy."[15] Today, under the editorship of Kate White, *Cosmopolitan* continues to promote the "fun fearless female" mentality with plunging necklines for the entire world to see.

Vogue

Since 1988, Anna Wintour has been the editor of *Vogue* magazine. Under Wintour's leadership, *Vogue* has stressed a glamorous cover image, emphasizing couture designer elegance over a model's physical attributes. In the October 1998 issue, Wintour expressed the *Vogue* cover philosophy, stating:

> For as long as I can remember, there have been moments when some editors or advertising executives decide they don't want to play the fantasy game and that clothes should be modeled by "real" people, with real bodies and faces. But these too often dour and puritanical sorties into "reality" never last long. They don't seem to resonate with readers the same way.[16]

Through Wintour's own words, the attitude and success behind the *Vogue* cover is explained. In order to attract the desired readership, the models gracing the cover of *Vogue* must possess certain abilities to transcend reality, entering a realm of fantasy and obviously unattainable beauty.

Glamour

Positioned between the styles of *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*, the covers of *Glamour* magazine used to be grounded in reality while still maintaining a strong emphasis upon physical attractiveness.[17] During editor Ruth Whitney's 31-year involvement with the magazine, *Glamour* took a more noteworthy approach than its competitors towards

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[15] Ibid., s27.

[16] Wintour, 76.

[17] Endres and Lueck, 110.

representing the physical diversity of its readers, such as the groundbreaking 1968 cover featuring the first black female. Like Brown's *Cosmopolitan*, the covers of *Glamour* were designed to emphasize a model's physical beauty. However, under Whitney, *Glamour* focused more on the face or overall body than just the cleavage area. In response to a feminist criticism of the impossibly thin and glamorous cover philosophy of fashion magazines, Whitney reported that the models she used were increasingly heavier over the years to match readers' changing shapes.[18] Whitney steered *Glamour* by one strict principle: If she didn't offend either her readers or her advertisers in six months-- or worse, a year-- she was probably not doing her job.[19]

Following Whitney's retirement in 1998, in a much-talked about maneuver, Bonnie Fuller became the editor-in-chief of *Glamour* magazine, leaving behind her position at *Cosmopolitan*. Today, *Glamour*, the women's magazine which had a strong journalistic reputation, has suddenly metamorphasized into a "sort of *Glamour*-lite," featuring "more visuals and fewer words, more celebrities and fewer serious articles, more sex and less substance."[20] Before her death, Whitney accused Fuller of having gone so far as to have "vulgarized sex."[21] And concerning *Glamour*'s transformation, Brown even commented, "I used to say that I had sex all to myself, and then the other women's magazine editors started getting smart."[22]

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[18] Ibid., 110.

[19] Lont, 94.

[20] Esther Davidowitz, "The Fuller Effect: A Hot Flash From *Glamour*: Sex Sells. But Sells What?" *Columbia Journalism Review* (May/June 1999), 51.

[21] Ibid., 51.

[22] Ibid., 51.

Although fashion magazines may have added more sex to the beauty equation, this does not affect an essential question relative to the cover image. What is the ethnicity of the women being depicted?

In August 1968, under the editorship of *Glamour*'s Ruth Whitney, the first black female-- Katiti Kirande-- appeared on the cover of a fashion magazine, generating mixed reactions from the magazine's distributors and consumers. The public's divided response triggered numerous subscription cancellations, but nowhere near the magnitude of new readers *Glamour* won over that month. This controversial issue alone sold more single copies than any other issue of *Glamour* to date.[23] One might think that this issue opened the covers of fashion magazines to women of different races. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. As *Cosmopolitan* editor Helen Gurley Brown admitted in 1992, "There may be a lot of black or ethnic models. But, how many of them do you see on the covers? Not all that many."[24]

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars examining the racial diversity of the media's coverage frequently conclude that "the press has been a racist institution, as it has reflected the racism prevalent in white society throughout our country's history."[25] Numerous studies have provided superfluous evidence of distorted, unrepresentative, and demeaning coverage of minority groups.[26] As recently as five years ago, blacks, Asians, and Native Americans

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[23] Lont, 93.

[24] Shirley Biagi and Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, eds., *Facing Difference: Race, Gender, and Mass Media* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1997), 14.

[25] Ibid., 90.

[26] Ibid., 90.

were still an essentially "invisible people," being excluded in editorial coverage as well as advertisement depictions.[27] A 1995 study organized by Ann Simonton-- a former model herself-- accumulated advertisements as evidence against the unjust and limited representation of women of color in the media.[28] That same year a study conducted by Lillie M. Fears also documented the popular press' portrayal of black women.[29] Separately, both Simonton and Fears concluded that when women of color did appear, they were constantly restricted to such stereotypical characters as brainless animals, savage beasts, sexual servants, gifted individuals, or strong mother figures. Furthermore, Simonton concluded that perhaps an even greater offense than the lack of representation was the presence of advertisements which perpetuated the push towards the removal of ethnicity, depicting the use of straightening products, bleaching agents, and colored contacts.[30]

This same trend of stereotyping ethnic characteristics in the popular press' portrayal of black women was examined in a 1994 study conducted by Kevin Keenan and Laureece Woodson of the University of Maryland which documented the phenomenon of "colorism," the discrimination of a person based upon her complexion and physical characteristics.[31] Hypothesizing an industry trend towards the use of "more Caucasian" looking black models, Keenan and Woodson compared the complexion and physical

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[27] Ibid., 155.

[28] Lont, 152.

[29] Fears.

[30] Lont, 152.

[31] Kevin L. Keenan and Laureece A. Woodson, "Colorism in Advertising: Some Issues Related to Race and Gender in Mainstream and African-American Women's Magazines," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Atlanta, August 1994.

characteristics of models appearing in advertisements for *Essence* and *Glamour* magazine.[32] The study concluded that black models pictured in *Essence* have more stereotypically Negroid features (darker skin, darker eye color, kinkier hair texture, broader nose shape, and fuller lip prominence) than black models who appeared in *Glamour*.[33]

And finally, in a 1993 article written by Jeff Yang and Angelo Ragaza, Western culture's "Beauty Machine"-- Hollywood, Madison Avenue, talent and modeling agencies, couture houses, fashion publications, cosmetic companies-- was singled out and attacked for being the "white yardstick used to determine who is beautiful and who is not."[34] Yang and Ragaza claimed: "People of color who do not conform to those standards (tall, thin, and white) have been consistently omitted from activities, events, publications, and advertising for which beauty is an entrée."[35] Additionally, the authors adamantly highlighted the statistical regression of colored models, pointing out that by 1990, models of color only appeared 1.6% of the time in the top women's magazines.[36] Yang and Ragaza held the fashion magazines responsible for the "editorial bottleneck" that restricted the idea of true beauty to a select number of ethnic supermodels.[37]

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Biagi and Kern-Foxworth, 11.

[35] Ibid., 11.

[36] Ibid., 11.

[37] Ibid., 14.

METHODOLOGY

Based upon the previously discussed research regarding minority representation within fashion magazines as well as the media in general, a prediction can be made that the majority of *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour* magazine covers will feature white female models. Due to a historical association between social status and "whiteness," a majority of the covers will most likely reinforce the racial complacency blinding today's public. Support for this hypothesis is derived from society's comfort in "more Caucasian" looking black females and the deeply stereotyped association of black females as strictly mothers, talented individuals, or sexual toys, but never as women possessing social value or self-worth.[38] Because of these stereotypical roles associated with black females, it is difficult to transcend the confining barriers relegating models of color to mothers and sexual objects and to produce a marketable image consistent with the magazines' emphasis on beauty. Therefore, despite modern society's recent obsession with maintaining political correctness and ethnic sensitivity, it is predicted that an absence of racial diversity exists among the faces on American fashion magazine covers published for today's readers. Thus, in relation to the current study, "the choice of who or what to feature on the cover becomes not only an editorial one, but also . . . a social indicator of where any group in society is today in terms of importance and value."[39] The results of this particular study could even be extrapolated to gauge each identified racial group's tier within society's hierarchy.

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[38] Keenan and Woodson; Fears.

[39] Johnson and Christ, 216.

In order to compile the necessary investigative data, every cover of *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour* magazine from the years 1996 to 2000 was researched, examining the model's race and the model's recognition name. Of the 180 magazine covers studied, 168 covers featured one female model while the remaining 12 featured two or more models. To maintain simplicity, the discussion of the results will focus solely upon the 168 covers featuring only one female model.

RESULTS

Upon conclusion of the investigation, the evidence supported the original hypothesis: No substantial racial diversity existed among the magazine covers of the selected fashion magazines-- *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour*. The investigation resulted in 147 covers, or 87.5% of the magazine covers, featuring one white model. Hispanics were featured on 11 covers, for 6.6% of the time, and blacks were on 6 covers, or 3.6%. Interestingly, not one Asian model was featured on the cover of the 168 covers used in the study. On four covers, or 2.4%, the racial identity of the model was unidentifiable because of the ethnic ambiguity of her name as well as her physical appearance.

Utilizing 2000 census information, the racial percentages of the magazine covers were compared to the racial population percentages within the United States.[40] According to 2000 census data, the white population constitutes 71.3% of the United States' total population.[41] The remaining minority populations are considerably smaller:

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[40] www.census.gov/population/estimates/nation/intfile3-1.txt.

[41] Ibid.

black 12.2%, Hispanic 11.9%, Asian 3.8%, and Native American 0.7%.[42] Based upon these numerical findings, the white segment of the population is over-represented on the covers of fashion magazines by 16.2%. On the opposite end of the spectrum, there is a drastic under-representation of the black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American segments of the nation's population.

DISCUSSION

The results of the investigation corresponded with the arguments put forth in the Keenan and Woodson study as well as the Yang and Ragaza article. Four of the five black models to be featured alone on a cover were celebrities with a high degree of public recognition: Mariah Carey, Halle Berry, Oprah Winfrey, and Lauren Hill. Not surprisingly, the one black celebrity-- Mariah Carey-- to grace the cover of two fashion magazines has a more characteristically white physical appearance, primarily due to her interracial background, and satisfied a stereotypical depiction for models of color, the talented individual. Thus, it appears that in order for a new trend in fashion to be embraced by the consuming public, it must first be assimilated into Hollywood's standards of beauty to acquire a degree of legitimacy.[43] For instance, Halle Berry-- another popular black model with an interracial background-- has a lucrative cosmetic contract with Revlon, while rocker Lauren Hill is renowned for her designer style, promoting names like Tommy Hilfiger and Giorgio Armani. This dependency, according to Yang and Ragaza, implies that if a true shift away from the idea of Anglo beauty towards a more ethnic look is to occur, it must originate in Hollywood with the casting of

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Biagi and Kern-Foxworth, 14.

more ethnic actors-- such as Puerto Rican bombshell Jennifer Lopez-- as character leads.[44] For example, in the 1980s, the popularity of films by Spike Lee helped to initiate advancements for ethnic beauty. But, in the 1990s, the return of the infamous blonde caused the progression towards ethnic diversity to stall out.[45] And now, the most frequented image of Hispanic beauty to be popularized by fashion magazines as well as the catwalk is the leggy Brazilian model Gisele, a staple among *Vogue* covers. (See Appendix A for the most featured covers models from 1996 to 2000.) With the perpetuation of such "single-shading," what conclusion is today's contemporary woman supposed to draw regarding her own ethnic diversity and self-perception?

In addition, it should be noted that *Glamour* magazine had the greatest degree of racial diversity, featuring 11 non-white models (two black, five Hispanic, and four unable to be determined) on the cover over the five-year period. Perhaps this "push" towards racial diversity reflects what Clarence Smith, Essence Communications and *Latina* president, describes as a "shifting awareness on the part of the marketers who are beginning to recognize minorities' 'daunting' purchasing power."[46] In *Folio* magazine's March 1999 issue, Smith said of the consumer market, "In the past five years, there has been a growing sophistication on the part of the marketing community that the complexion [of the country] is changing."[47] Yet contrary to Smith's optimism, the results did, however, provide evidence that a select group of white supermodels-- Rebecca Romjin-Stamos, Heidi Klum, Carolyn Murphy, and Claudia Schiffer-- still clearly

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[44] Ibid., 14.

[45] Ibid., 15.

[46] Lorraine Calvacca, "Agencies, Marketers Called On to Back Minority Media," *Folio* (March 1999), 19.

[47] Ibid., 19.

dominates the covers of fashion magazines, leaving little room for new beauty and talent. Therefore, according to the documented evidence, there is a blatant absence of racial diversity among the faces of fashion magazine covers. Further clarification of the investigative data is provided in Table 2 through Table 8.

Table 1 Magazine Media Kit Material

	Cosmopolitan[48]	*Glamour*[49]	*Vogue*[50]
Market Ranking	1	2	3
Editorial / Positioning Statement	"Edited for young women who live big, go for it, and want to have it all."	"Voice of today's smart, energetic and confident woman."	"The ultimate image icon. Before it's in fashion, it's in *Vogue*."
Median Age of Readership	35.0	31.4	34.0
Readers Attended / Graduated College	58.6%	57.9%	60%
Median HHI of Readership	$65,532	$49,046	$50,422
Newsstand Circulation (as of 6/30/00)[51]	2,709,496	2,207,914	1,112,917
Cover Price	$3.50	$2.99	$3.00

Table 2 Racial Diversity Among Fashion Magazine Covers in 1996

	Cosmopolitan	*Glamour*	*Vogue*
White	12	11	9
Black	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0
Unable to be Determined	0	0	0

[48] *Cosmopolitan* Media Kit 2001.

[49] *Glamour* Media Kit 2001.

[50] *Vogue* Media Kit 2001.

[51] *SRDS: Consumer Magazine Advertising Source* (February 2001).

Table 3 Racial Diversity Among Fashion Magazine Covers in 1997

	Cosmopolitan	*Glamour*	*Vogue*
White	10	9	8
Black	1	0	1
Hispanic	1	1	0
Asian	0	0	0
Unable to be Determined	0	2	0

Table 4 Racial Diversity Among Fashion Magazine Covers in 1998

	Cosmopolitan	*Glamour*	*Vogue*
White	12	8	10
Black	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	1	0
Asian	0	0	0
Unable to be Determined	0	2	0

Table 5 Racial Diversity Among Fashion Magazine Covers in 1999

	Cosmopolitan	*Glamour*	*Vogue*
White	10	11	7
Black	0	1	1
Hispanic	2	1	2
Asian	0	0	0
Unable to be Determined	0	0	0

Table 6 Racial Diversity Among Fashion Magazine Covers in 2000

	Cosmopolitan	*Glamour*	*Vogue*
White	12	10	8
Black	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	2	1
Asian	0	0	0
Unable to be determined	0	0	0

Table 7 Racial Diversity Among Celebrities on Fashion Magazine Covers from 1996-2000

	Cosmopolitan	*Glamour*	*Vogue*
White	17	14	17
Black	0	0	2
Hispanic	1	2	0
Asian	0	0	0
Interracial	1	2	0

Table 8 Percentage Comparison of Racial Diversity Representation

	Total Percentage of Cover Appearance from 1996 to 2000	Percentage of the United States' Population in 2000[52]	Percentage Difference Between Cover Appearance and Population
White	87.5%	71.3%	+16.2%
Black	3.6%	12.2%	-8.6%
Hispanic	6.6%	11.9%	-5.4%
Asian	---	3.8%	---
Native American	---	0.7%	---

FUTURE RESEARCH

The next question to be addressed is whether the absence of racial diversity among the fashion covers can dissuade a consumer from purchasing the magazine, and if so, is such consumer discrimination profitable? To answer this question, an extensive study would have to be undertaken, interviewing hundreds of consumers as well as magazine editors. Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, a few basic arguments will be proposed regarding the relationship between racial diversity and the minority consumer.

[52] www.census.gov/population/estimates/nation/intfile3-1.txt.

In order to turn a profit in the consumer world, the final product must appeal to the intended target consumer audience. According to the editorial philosophies of *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour*, all women between the ages of 18 and 35 are regarded as potential consumers. This philosophy, as proven by the presented research, is not reflected upon the magazines' covers. By limiting the racial diversity of the cover models, it is possible that potential minority consumers are being ignored within the general women's market. In 1997, it was reported that 40% of the United States' middle class was composed of blacks, with one-third of them residing in the suburbs.[53] In addition, an article in *The Washington Post* stated that the "black middle class has grown to unprecedented levels, black business has expanded and the number of black elected officials continues to increase."[54] In fact, it has even been predicted that by the middle of this century, the size of the minority population within the United States should almost equal the size of the nation's white population.[55] With trends such as these, it appears that the fashion magazine industry is ignoring a potentially viable market, not complying with the consumer's desire for perhaps more racially diverse covers, internal images, and content. Specifically, within the black and Hispanic segments of the nation's population, there exists a middle class with enough monetary power to purchase fashion magazines. And based solely upon speculation, this absence of racial diversity among fashion magazine covers could deter the economically viable portions of these minority populations from purchasing fashion magazines.

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[53] Tamala M. Edwards, "Throwing the Book at Race: A Benchmark New Work Turns the Accepted History of Racial Progress in America Upside Down," *Time* (Sept. 8, 1997), 61.

[54] Michael A. Fletcher, "Prophecy on Race Relations Came True," *The Washington Post* (Jan. 3 1998, natl. ed.), A06.

[55] Johnson and Prijatel, 98.

During a lecture in 1993, Ruth Whitney reflected upon *Glamour*'s famous 1968 cover, stating:

> Keep in mind that 25 years later, African-Americans appear regularly in many women's magazines-- on covers and inside-- but in numbers nowhere near equal to their total part of the population. They are still ignored, overlooked, omitted in hundreds of big and little ways. Magazines still have miles to go in welcoming diversity, and so does the whole American society.[56]

Whitney was right. Though progress has been made towards a more accurate racial representation of the American woman, fashion magazines still have to make tremendous strides to eradicate the racial stereotypes of the past.

Simonton herself even perceived the media's flagrant attempts at racial diversity as a somewhat insincere hoax, stating, "The fact that women of color are occasionally portrayed as articulate, intelligent, fully clothed humans may say more about the media executive's awareness than any newfound scruples on their part."[57] More than 30 years after *Glamour*'s controversial 1968 cover, the question of racial diversity still pervades the image of fashion magazines. It is 2001, and it is a rare occurrence to see a black, let alone an Asian, model on the cover of a mainstream fashion magazine. Will this same issue still be haunting *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, and *Glamour* in another 30 years? The consumer will have to wait and see.

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[56] Ruth Whitney, "Magazines: Society's Leaders or Followers? *Glamour* and the Changing American Woman," a lecture presented at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Drake University. Des Moines, April 1993.

[57] Lont, 152.

APPENDIX A Most Featured Cover Models from 1996 to 2000

1996
Cindy Crawford
Claudia Schiffer
Amber Valetto
Niki Taylor
Kate Moss
Rebecca Romjin-Stamos
Daniela Pestova

1997
Cindy Crawford
Claudia Schiffer
Amber Valetto
Daniela Pestova
Shalom Harlow
Elizabeth Hurley

1998
Cindy Crawford
Claudia Schiffer
Amber Valetto
Kate Moss
Rebecca Romjin-Stamos
Elizabeth Hurley
Carolyn Murphy

1999
Cindy Crawford
Claudia Schiffer
Kate Moss
Rebecca Romjin-Stamos
Carolyn Murphy
Heidi Klum
Gisele
James King

2000
Claudia Schiffer
Amber Valetto
Rebecca Romjin-Stamos
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Carolyn Murphy
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REPORTER AT LARGE:
Morris Markey's Literary Journalism in *The New Yorker*

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Submitted to:
Magazine Division
2001 AEJMC National Conference

REPORTER AT LARGE
Morris Markey's literary journalism in *The New Yorker*

Introduction

If his writing is a reliable guide to his personality, Morris Markey (1899-1950) was pompous, self-centered and condescending. His journalistic work is of mixed quality, and his reporting career is bracketed by two novels most charitably described as tepid. He apparently had little respect for his journalistic colleagues and there are hints that his colleagues did not think much of him, either.

Nevertheless, Morris Markey has not received due credit. As one of the earliest long-time staffers at *The New Yorker*, he helped lay a foundation for literary journalism that would later erupt with the "New Journalism" of the 1960s.

Analysts of literary journalism have long recognized that journalists have used the techniques of fiction to describe factual events for centuries. Daniel DeFoe was doing it in the early 1700s with one of the first works of disaster journalism, *The Storm*, 1704. In their anthology of literary journalism, Kerrane and Yagoda list James Boswell, Charles Dickens, W.T. Stead, Stephen Crane, Abraham Cahan, and Jack London as "Pioneers" in the field,[1] all predating Markey, and that list does not even include such notables as Mark Twain and Lincoln Steffens.

Still, Markey can lay claim to fame on the grounds that he kept the flame of literary journalism alive (rather dim, perhaps, at times, but still burning) between 1925 and the early 1930s with his "Reporter at Large" column. He was a sort of Brooklyn Bridge between turn of the century journalists like Crane and Joseph Mitchell, who is more often credited with introducing literary journalism to *The New Yorker*. Moreover,

The New Yorker was the one of first magazines to build a lasting reputation and readership in part due to the strength of its literary journalism, and Markey was the first reporter to do it well at that magazine.

The standard interpretation of Tom Wolfe's famous, definitive essay on "The New Journalism" (although he claimed to be uncomfortable with that term) is that it originated with a Jimmy Breslin column in the city newsroom of the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1963: "There it was, a short story, complete with symbolism, in fact, and yet true to life, as they say, about something that happened today . . .."[2] The new style was prompted, he wrote, by the decline of the American novel. Deep down, journalists really wanted to be novelists, he decided, and

> in the late 1960s a curious new notion, just hot enough to inflame the ego, had begun to intrude in the tiny confines of the features statusphere . . . This discovery, modest at first, humble, in fact, deferential, you might say, was that it just might be possible to write journalism that would . . . read like a novel. *Like* a novel, if you get the picture. This was the sincerest form of homage to The Novel and to those greats, the novelists, of course.[3]

He went on to defend the New Journalism against charges that it was really just made-up drivel, poorly researched and "impressionistic." I t was, he insisted, based on thorough reporting: "The idea was to give the full objective description, plus something else that readers had always had to go to novels and short stories for; namely, the subjective or emotional life of the characters."[4]

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[1] Kevin Kerrane and Ben Yagoda, eds. *The Art of Fact: A Historical Anthology of Literary Journalism* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997.
[2] Tom Wolfe, *The New Journalism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973) p. 13.
[3] *The New Journalism*, p. 9.
[4] Ibid, p. 20.

"Nonsense," snorted Jack Newfield a year later. The New Journalism was "nothing more profound than a lot of good writers coming along at the same time." This rush of new talent, furthermore,

> did not spring Zeus-like like from John Hay Whitney's banker's brow in the *Trib's* protean cityroom in late 1963. It appears, rather, to have crystallized at *Esquire* in the late 1950s, and to have been motivated by an economic desperation to compete with *Playboy's* sexist centerfolds, then attracting considerable advertising revenue away from *Esquire*.[5]

Others, who do accept that the New Journalism really was new, place its origins even earlier. Kerrane and Yagoda observe that "World War II had a salutary effect on nonfiction writing." The horrors of war, the "old formulas proving inadequate, engendered new ways of representing the world."[6] John Hersey's 1946 *Hiroshima*, an account of the aftermath of the war-ending atomic bomb, was a perfect example.

Norman Sims goes back yet further, to the late 1930s, and asserts that "Joseph Mitchell and several of his colleagues at *The New Yorker* were responsible for keeping literary journalism alive during the middle years of the twentieth century before the New Journalism burst on the American scene."[7] Wolfe knew this, asserted Sims, but because of the hard feelings over Wolfe's 1965 attack on *The New Yorker* editor William Shawn (a nasty combination of satire and reporting that drew some vicious reprisals—the title of the *New York* piece says it all: "Tiny Mummies! The True Story of the Ruler of 43rd

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[5] Jack Newfield, "Is There a New Journalism?" in *The Reporter as Artist*, ed. Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, Publishers, 1974) p. 300.
[6] *The Art of Fact*, p. 104.
[7] Norman Sims, "Joseph Mitchell and *The New Yorker* Nonfiction Writers" in *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norman Sims (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) p. 83. Thomas Kunke, *Genius in Disguise: Harold Ross of* The New Yorker (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 300, also gives credit to the "third wave" of reporters hired in the late 1930s.

Street's Land of the Walking Dead!"), "Wolfe could not bring himself to acknowledge *The New Yorker*'s genuine contributions."[8]

But that is not, strictly speaking, true. In his essay Wolfe acknowledges Boswell, Twain, Henry Mayhew, Crane, Hersey, and Lillian Ross as "Not Half-Bad Candidates" to be credited with founding New Journalism, and concludes that "if anyone wants to maintain that the current tradition starts with *The New Yorker* and *True*, I will not contest the point."[9]

Very well, then. The current tradition did start with *The New Yorker*, and not with the arrival of A.J. Liebling and Joseph Mitchell in the mid 1930s, but a decade earlier with Morris Markey in the publication's first months. By including Markey in his anthology of literary journalism, and by his comments elsewhere, Yagoda has acknowledged that Markey deserves a place in the history of literary journalism. This paper will explain his contribution of being one of the first to consistently employ techniques that were later more fully developed in the New Journalism.

Reporter at Large

Morris Markey was born in Alexandria, Va., in 1899 and attended high school in Richmond. He served in France during the war, rising to First Lieutenant. He was fired from his first post-war job, in a soap factory, and in 1922 came to New York. He found work as a reporter, first with the *Newark Ledger*, followed by stints at the *New York Daily News*, the *New York Evening World*, and the *New York World*.

In 1925 *World* was edited by Herbert Bayard Swope who, in Yagoda's opinion, had "transformed Joseph Pulitzer's yellow sheet into a paper of estimable style and

[8] "Joseph Mitchell and *The New Yorker* Nonfiction Writers," p. 107.
[9] *The New Journalism*, p. 46.

wit."[10] Harold Ross had just founded *The New Yorker* earlier that year, promising in his famous prospectus to create a magazine that was "a reflection in word and picture of metropolitan life," definitely not "edited for the old lady in Dubuque."[11] To do this he needed writers capable of interpreting news and events in a "sophisticated" style. Ross figured that Markey, whose work at *World* he had noticed, "possessed a writing style more graceful, even literary, than that of the usual ink-stained wretch."[12] He invited Markey up to his office for a chat.

Markey was "a tall, blond, affable youth of twenty-five with a background that had much in common with Ross's." [13] Markey recalled in the introduction to his first of two collections of columns, *That's New York!*[14], which he dedicated to Ross, that he distinctly remembered

> what you told me, which was to be honest at whatever cost. It was entirely novel to be told such a thing. I had written for newspapers and newspaper writers can never be wholly honest, no matter what they editors say, for the reason that they can never allow themselves to be bored, or indifferent, or exerted, or angry, or to forget the caution instilled into them by the fear of violating good taste.

Kunke reported that Ross "uttered the words that every young journalist longs to hear but seldom does, 'Write exactly what you see, exactly what you feel.' The young man was hooked."[15] Kramer, writing some years earlier, uses a longer version of that quote, but neither Kramer nor Kunke offer attribution for it, raising the possibility that Kramer was

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[10] Ben Yagoda, *About Town:* The New Yorker *and the World it Made* (New York: Scribner, 2000), p. 38.
[11] Cited in *About Town*, p. 38.
[12] Kunke, *Genius in Disguise*, p. 127.
[13] Dale Kramer, *Ross and* The New Yorker (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1951), p. 88.
[14] Morris Markey, That's New York! (New York: Macy-Masius, 1927).
[15] *Genius*, p. 127.

perhaps improving Markey's own version a bit.[16] By time Yagoda recounts the story, he has it down to "a simple charge: roam the city and write down what you see."[17]

Both Kunke and Kramer describe how "the technique which Markey and Ross worked out between them was in time to strongly influence nonfiction writing, especially for magazines. Though 'Reporter [at Large]' pieces were factual, the technique of the short story was borrowed for their composition."[18] They would sometimes argue, line by line, over pieces Ross had edited. "'The only thing I had a talent for,' Markey said later, 'was looking at a thing and trying to tell people exactly what I saw. Ross knew that, and I suppose he was trying to sharpen it.'"[19]

Ross, for his part, was still trying to sort out *The New Yorker* style. He had originally envisioned a magazine chiefly of satire and wit, something to compete with *Judge*, perhaps, but with "human" feel and a "metropolitan" sophistication that would appeal to New York's upper classes. *The New Yorker* also tended to write about itself, what Yagoda called "reflexive commentary," and Yagoda offered the following item, undated but from the magazine's financially unstable early years, as an example:

> Observed on the elevated newsstand at Forty-Second Street was *The New Yorker* prominently displayed between *True* and *Snappy Stories*. This, says the circulation manager, is very, very good news. Suicide Day for the sincere member of the staff has been set for next Tuesday.[20]

Markey seems to have thrived under this "reflexive" tendency. As Yagoda noted,

> Markey didn't only display his emotions in his stories, he displayed himself, habitually structuring them around the act of reporting. This near-

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[16] *Ross and* The New Yorker, p. 88.
[17] *The Art of Fact*, p. 93.
[18] Kramer, p. 117.
[19] Kramer, p. 89.
[20] Yagoda, *About Town*, p. 47-8.

> revolutionary unveiling of the traditionally invisible reporter prefigured the 'new journalists' of forty years hence.[21]

The result is that if one thing comes through loud and clear in Morris Markey's writing, it's Morris Markey. In the years 1925-27 he seemed, in general, contemptuous of "the masses." In a piece about an afternoon at a Yankees baseball game, "I had observed the spectacle of 55,000 people transformed from money-grubbing human animals, with bills to meet and bosses to please, into a holiday throng, with laughter in their voices and contentment in their eyes."[22] In an account of a murder trial, in which the jurors were "bored and probably stupid, as most juries are,"[23] he concluded that there was "no honest effort to find the truth" but "as a spectacle, an ironic spectacle full of juicy chuckles! Ah!"[24] In a piece entitled "Presto! Fame!" he concludes that politics, art, religion, and literature are all moribund and so "the mob has nobody, literally, to worship except athletic prodigies."[25] He concludes an account of a divorce trial, whose tawdry details were creating a sensation in New York, with the assertion that you can

> curse [the tabloids] for the debauchery they practice upon the public mind, upon public taste and the esthetic tone of our nation. Or one may be amused . . . One may say, "The sight of the human herd rollicking amid the cheap and filthy is a spectacle for the amusement of the intelligent. Let us watch them build their ethos and their dreams upon the textbook of the tabloids, and chuckle deeply." But even so, one must occasionally hold his nose.[26]

Was this a back-hand slap at his targeted high-brow readership or pure, elitist condescension? It strikes me as the latter, possibly to be chalked up to a kind of youthful exuberance at being allowed, or rather invited, to "be honest at whatever cost." It should

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[21] Ibid., 76.
[22] "A Yankee Holiday," *That's New York!*, p. 138.
[23] "The Somerville Follies," *That's New York!*, p. 41.
[24] Ibid., p. 45.
[25] Ibid., p. 94.

be also be remembered that Harold Ross edited these stories, with *The New Yorker*'s target upper-class audience in mind, intending to create a tone of sophisticated, ironic detachment.

The condescension is even more pronounced in Markey's 1932 travelogue, suggestively titled *This Country of Yours*. He left *The New Yorker* and spent a year driving around in his Ford, "to undertake the immense impertinence of worming my way into their homes and their private thoughts, for I wanted to discover how [the common folk] live and what they live by."[27] It sounds good, but within five pages he is not finding out what they think, he is arguing with them. After the superintendent of a mine near Duluth has the effrontery to tell him that, yes, his workers are satisfied, Markey writes, "I said, 'You know the country is full of fellows like you, and I never get over being amazed by it.' He wanted to know what I was talking about." After Markey berates the guy for supporting his company, the superintendent weakly responds, "Well, you have to be loyal, don't you?" "To a lot of stockholders in Pittsburgh?" responds the writer.[28]

This badgering interview style persists throughout the book, and would never have been recorded had not Markey possessed both a keen ear for dialogue and a complete confidence in the rightness of his own position. The book concludes with a rant against the press (there were "no more than a dozen newspapers in the country" that would not let themselves be censored by their advertisers), religion (Christianity was impotent and children are not taught morals), and the country in general ("The ideals and aims upon which this country was founded have disappeared . . .").[29]

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[26] "The Blackstone Revels," *That's New York!* p. 29-30.
[27] Morris Markey, *This Country of Yours* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1932) p. viii.
[28] Ibid, p. 5.
[29] Ibid. p. 304-312.

But there are also times when *This Country of Yours* foreshadows the 1960s New Journalism more closely than it might initially seem. The New Journalism sometimes had a tone of indignation, of self-righteous anger over injustices they saw in racism, Vietnam, the Nixon administration, materialism, and other targets. Markey had that same indignation prodding him to prod is subjects into an awareness of the injustice in their lives. The Muckrakers of the early 1900s were driven by that same moral imperative, but where the Muckrakers generally kept themselves out of their stories, Markey gave the frustration in his stories a personal tone, and some of the New Journalists who came after took an intensely personal approach.

His second collection of "Reporter at Large" columns, *Manhattan Reporter*,[30] published in 1935, shows more restraint. But his ironic detachment, which implied that he and the reader who identified with him were a cut above the common "herd," was still ubiquitous. In "Nocturne," for example, Markey and a friend literally whistle up a policeman to ask directions to a speakeasy during Prohibition. Once there, the pair (in Markey's version) use their quick wits and quicker tongues to narrowly escape being robbed. Never once in Markey's three collections of journalism is there a flash of self-depreciating humor (a telling point in a writer for a humor publication) and Harold Ross's assessment, from around 1930, seems about right: "Markey's gotten to the point where he thinks everything that happens to him is interesting."[31]

But from the first years of his column Markey demonstrated a flair for a style that felt literary without being stuffy or long-winded. Here is the lead from "Our Gangs":

> A day or two ago an anemic youth in a fifteen dollar suit walked out of a candy store down in Delancey Street and shuffled over to stand at the

[30] Morris Markey, *Manhattan Reporter* (New York: Dodge Publishing Company, 1935).
[31] Kunke, *Genius in Disguise*, p. 127.

> curb, bending his face disconsolately upon the concrete sidewalk. He had been there about ten minutes when a crowd of men drove up behind in an automobile and killed him. They killed him rather thoroughly. Without bothering to stop the car, they poked three or four pistols through the curtains and emptied them in the general direction of the youth's back.

No pedestrians were killed, notes Markey, because everybody in the neighborhood knew that the youth was a "marked man":

> To preserve life, one always listens to the chatter one hears in the candy stores and the cafes. And when one discovers that Abie Cohen is about to be bumped off, one simply crosses the street whenever Abie crawls out of his tenement flat for an airing.[32]

In fact, Markey regularly used all four of Tom Wolfe's classic list of the characteristics of the New Journalism: scene-by-scene construction, detailed record of the dialogue, third-person point of view, and the use of status symbol details. Although seldom does a single story contain good examples of all four techniques, that may be more a reflection of the length of Markey's articles—1,500-2,500 words, compared to the 5,000 or more Wolfe's New Journalists were putting out—than any stylistic limits on his talent.

In the "Case of the Poisoned Bun," for example, Markey recreates for the reader, apparently from nothing more than police reports and his own imagination (both main characters being dead), the scene near Broadway and 104th St. He tells how a man needing $100 dollars to pay a debt went into a drugstore to buy "forty-five cents worth of cyanide":

> Now you see a woman named Lillian Rosenfeld—a ragamuffin woman with a soiled face—creeping out of the cellar where she lives. She walks along the street while Jellinek is in the drugstore. She has never heard of Jellinek or his hundred dollars.[33]

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[32] *That's New York!* p. 5.
[33] *Manhattan Reporter*, p. 141.

Jellinek sprinkled the cyanide on a snack he bought in an Automat, felt sick and dropped it on his table to go die in the basement because "there must not be a scene. It would not be nice to upset all those people sitting quietly at breakfast." Rosenfeld came along scavenging for food and "as he got up, went away, she saw business. Her kind of business. She was up like a hawk. Like a hawk she swooped toward the table he had left" and "grasped the half-eaten bun with the white powder spread among its poppy seeds, and went back to her perch, and munched the bun until it was all consumed." She soon toppled from her chair and died. Investigators later discovered she had $45,000 in various bank accounts.

Markey also had a nice ear for dialogue, and would sometimes offer extended quotes, frequently enlivened by his keen sense of irony:

> "Come in simple faith to Jesus!" [the girl evangelist] cried, "and you will be healed. And that is not the power of mind over matter. That is not suggestion! It is the living power of Jesus, pouring through your body. It may seem strange to some of you, no doubt, that I am standing here and preaching the healing power of Jesus, and still the Devil has a hold of my throat. You ask what that means, and maybe you won't come to listen to me preach God's word. But you do come, all right!"
>
> The Amens were accompanied by nervous laughter this time, and they redoubled in intensity when she shouted, "Choose Jesus as your physician and trust in Him!"
>
> Another paroxysm of coughing seized her, ...

Wolfe felt that the primary benefit of third person point of view was to allow the writer to get into his subjects' thoughts and feelings. Most magazine journalism prior to the 1960s, he felt, failed to do this; much description was best characterized as the work of "The Literary Gentleman with a Seat in the Grandstand."[34] This is largely a fair criticism of Markey, but occasionally he reached a little deeper.

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[34] *The New Journalism*, p. 42.

"The Marlow Mystery"[35] opens with the ringing of a telephone, "a trivial and slightly stupid sort of noise to be a gong of doom." Markey then sets the scene in La Tavernelle, "a dull little restaurant in Fifty-Second Street," a description qualified by the observation that "genuine tough joints have a way of appearing paralyzed with dullness to the slumming eye." Frankie Marlow, Markey explains, is sitting "across the white cloth" with his "friends," including a boxer, a promoter, some other unsavory characters, and "Mary Seiden was Mickey of the Rendezvous, whose small dancing heels had sailed close to trouble often enough." Marlow was in trouble, we discover,

> with thin ice abounding on every side and every greeting from an acquaintance flavored by the narrowed eyes of a new grievance. He had borrowed money from everybody. He had appropriated money placed in his hands for dubious purposes. All of this he had bet on the races, and lost; his difficulties were complicated by the bad racing tips he had given to every friend he had.

Markey's work contains fewer items from Norman Sims' list of the characteristics of literary journalism.[36] Perhaps constrained by the weekly deadlines of *The New Yorker*, Markey did not practice immersion reporting as later reporters would, nor does he use particularly complicated structures. Still, in Markey's tone and voice, his choice of topics and his style, he reflects what it felt like to live in New York in that period. In the end that may be a truer measure of whether a work qualifies as "literary journalism" than a perfect match with a grocery list of qualifications.

Epilogue

Sadly, after the publication of *This Country of Yours* Markey's career began to fizzle. Yagoda reports that he suffered "what turned out to be a spotty career as a

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[35] *Manhattan Reporter*, p. 3-10.
[36] Norman Sims, "The Art of Literary Journalism" in Literary Journalism (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), p. 5.

Hollywood scriptwriter and freelance journalist."[37] Through the 1930s he wrote occasionally for *American Mercury*, *Harper's*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*, and rarely for *The New Yorker*. He is still remembered in some Alcoholics Anonymous circles for his complimentary October, 1939, piece in *Liberty* magazine, possibly the group's first national exposure, called "Alcoholics and God: Is there hope for habitual drunkards? A cure that borders on the miraculous—and it works!"

In the Second World War he became a Navy correspondent, and in 1945 came out with *Well Done!*, a fawning account of an aircraft carrier crew in the Pacific theatre. By the late 1940s, according to the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, Markey was writing primarily for *Holiday* magazine, producing articles with titles like "America's Favorite Meat." His last book was a novel, *Doctor Jeremiah*,[38] about a physician dealing with his personal and ethical dilemmas. The highest praise his publisher can come up with for the dust jacket is the fact that the American Medical Association once published an article praising his medical journalism, and that "nowadays he takes pride in the fact that he is at his desk 364 days every year. Christmas is his holiday." The photo shows him clean-shaven, dark-haired, and tending to chubbiness, with glasses slightly askew. He looks like a career bureaucrat.

When Morris Markey died on July 11, 1950, at his new home in Halifax, Va., *TIME* said in a brief obituary (July 24 issue) that it was the result of an "accidental, self-inflicted gunshot wound." However, the Aug. 5 *Publisher's Weekly* added, somewhat ominously, that he was killed with a rifle bullet and that the "coroner entered an open verdict."

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[37] Yagoda, *The Art of Fact*, p. 93.
[38] New York: Dial Press, 1950.

AEJMC ANNUAL CONVENTION 2001
Magazine Division
Refereed Paper Session, Sunday, Aug. 5, 9.45-11.15 a.m.

ART, IDEOLOGY AND AMERICANISATION IN POST-WAR DUTCH JOURNALISM

In post-war Netherlands the aim was to restore politics in art criticism. The authoritative US publication *The New Yorker* functioned as a fig leaf. I intend to test whether this aim was achieved by embarking on a case study of *Mandril*, an opinion-shaping monthly magazine that was edited from the Netherlands between 1948 and 1953. It was also a light-satirical publication which renewed journalistic practices. *Mandril* projected a modern transparency in its political commentary. At the same time, however, the editors seemed to reject artistic renewal. Hence, the Cobra artists, like Karel Appel, were discarded as subversive communists. *Mandril* heralded the start of an American press culture in The Netherlands. How and why did they do that? I intend to address such questions by studying *Mandril* because this short-lived publication can shed light on the head-on post-war collision between ideology and journalism for people who are unfamiliar with the Dutch situation.

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ART, IDEOLOGY AND AMERICANISATION IN POST-WAR DUTCH JOURNALISM

HANS RENDERS

In his study *Discovering the News* Michael Schudson came to the conclusion that journalists try to objectify their standards and values by stressing the importance of 'facts'. Gaye Tuchman says it perhaps more concisely: 'the word "objectivity" is fraught with meaning'.[1] To talk of journalism is to talk of ideology. Let us interpret ideology in the sense given to it by the French philosopher Jean-François Revel in his book *La Connaissance Inutile* (1988): a mixture of strong emotions and simple ideas which is expressed in a form of behaviour.[2] It is a rather negative definition of ideology, which stems from Revel's principle that ideological thought comes prior to the examination and argumentation of facts.

You can examine ideology by looking for the hidden and unconscious motives behind openly expressed convictions. In press history studies the emphasis is almost always laid on the political culture of the medium under examination. Such studies rarely devote much attention to art, even though that constitutes a substantial part of a newspaper or magazine.[3] Though we happily leave the art section and the art information

on news pages as historical source to art historians and literary experts, they often show little interest in journalism in return. They look to reviews of books or exhibitions in order to discover more about the reception of an artist or movement. And yet from a journalistic point of view there is much that is worthy of mention about art in the newspaper.

While it would be absurd to question how far political coverage is about politics, you may well wonder to what extent art coverage is about art. Elaborating further on this theme, this lecture will proceed to discuss hidden ideologies in art coverage as part of a particular journalistic culture shortly after the Second World War in the Netherlands. Because such a subject is too wide to be treated in a general way, I shall focus on the news magazine *Mandril* from several angles; the following should be seen as a case study of the relationship between art and politics in the context of journalistic innovation. To what extent was the attention given to art in *Mandril* fuelled by hidden ideologies, not only in factual reporting but also in the way in which art was written about?

Mandril did not stand alone as a renascent medium. In the wake of the newspaper *Het Parool*, which had its origins in the resistance, the late nineteen forties saw the appearance of several journalistic weeklies and monthlies which gave paramount importance to breaking the still rigid patterns

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within the pillarised society of the immediate post-war years. Since the middle of the nineteenth century Dutch society had been divided into ideological pillars. This meant that Catholics, Protestants and socialists (as well as the 'residual pillar' of the liberals) had their own schools, societies and even their own press. Needless to say, this rigidly enforced segmentation and segregation entailed a close relationship with political and artistic institutions. The result of this socially and ideologically fragmented system was that people from the same pillar did not criticise each other, and events seen as the domain of another pillar were rarely the subject of serious attention.[4]

Mandril is an example of post-war endeavour to found a non-pillarized press by avoiding party politics and by abolishing the taboo on humour and independent thought which was still prevalent in both Catholic and Protestant newspapers. *Mandril* also shows that there was a need to cover art with the same topicality as politics. *Mandril* gave a lot of attention to new art forms from America: not only film and jazz but American journalistic trends too were given more space than previously: commentaries, columns and cartoons for example. It was an American novelty to let the honest man in the street have his say now and then.

Although rationality was regarded as a prerequisite for liberalism, the name of the magazine referred to a West African

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species of ape also known as a 'bush devil'. (Rationalisme kon ook wel spottend getoond worden, zoals de bosduivel die zijn billen naar het publiek keert, zie Ned. versie.) The *Mandril* editors made no secret of the fact that they were aiming at a Dutch equivalent of the American weekly *The New Yorker*. Features were simply adopted.[5] For example the introductory feature 'On dit ...on dat', generally written by Eduard Elias, was a blatant copy of the *New Yorker*'s 'The Talk of the Town'. A first glance at the cartoons in *Mandril* leaves little doubt that Dutch cartoonists were sometimes extremely directly inspired by their American counterparts.[6]

The founders of *Mandril* had learned to smile again in those first years of liberation, liberally assisted by such American delights as cartoons, coca cola, chewing gum and paperback books. They were not the only ones who were open to entertainment from the new world: volumes such as *Keep on smiling* and *America's favourite jokes*, which appeared in 1947 and 1948, were only two of many titles in this genre. There were many best-selling humorous books in the Prisma and Zwarte Beer paperback series. Prisma even used the advertising slogan 'Fight the cold war with good humour and amusement'.[7] The first issue of *Mandril* was a success, the 5000 printed copies selling out within two days, so that an extra 5000 had to be printed.[8] That was a large run by Dutch standards.

The editors of *Mandril* were experienced journalists who

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advocated a lifestyle without manifest political preferences. Eduard Elias and Henri Knap took the lead, the former writing for the conservative weekly *Elseviers Weekblad*. Knap worked for *Het Parool*, to which he contributed a celebrated feature under the name of Dagboekanier (Day-buccaneer). Charles Boost was film editor of the Catholic daily *De Tijd* and Frits van der Molen worked for *Elseviers Weekblad*. In their magazine-format journal the editors liked to give the impression of being above politics by discussing the lighter side of life in a deadly serious manner. An exposé on the etiquette of giving tips fitted in well with this approach. In the editorial at the end of the first year it even appeared in so many words: the 'mandrilleurs' were only interested in making a magazine for fun. Just as big brother *The New Yorker* had so often declared, *Mandril* was not trying to prove anything. There is no idealism, let alone political idealism, to be found in *Mandril*. And yet in the 'On dit ... on dat' column, which often had a tone of editorial comment, it was often remarked that *Mandril*'s political opinion ought to be taken seriously, all the more so since that opinion had neither authority nor influence. Thus, observations about politics were made, but it is difficult to find a straightforward political conviction explicitly expressed in *Mandril*. Why? Not having to express political desires is often the privilege of the established order whose wishes have already been fulfilled. And as Herbert Altschull

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has shown already so convincingly in *From Milton to McLuhan*: so-called objectivity about political writing leads to the endorsement of mainstream political views, which in turn gives rise to political smugness, as the history of *Mandril* would also demonstrate.[9]

Mandril's editors had found the ideal publisher in Jules Perel. He specialised in magazines which did well to keep politics at a distance, such as *Hilton Holland Magazine* and *Ideeal Wonen* (Ideal Living). He was also responsible for *Elegance*, which he began publishing in 1937.[10] Several advertisers in this glossy for elegant women also managed to find their way to *Mandril*.

Perel also managed to secure advertisements from hotels and the manufacturers of coca cola, nylons and spirits. Advertisers need to be handled carefully. So when Elias made critical remarks in an article about the Doelen Hotel, Perel intervened personally and published his only contribution ever to *Mandril*, in which he stated that Elias had been 'most unreasonable' in his criticism. The hotel and restaurant trade continued to advertise, but this was not enough to compensate Perel for the shortage of subscribers. The anticipated flood of new advertisers did not materialise; even the contributions of the famous copywriter Karel Sartory, who wrote pieces for *Mandril*, did not change matters. In the spring of 1953, after 44 issues, Perel called it a day.[11]

Looking at the editorial pages of *Mandril* it is obvious that Elias and Knap did not mince their words. In the very first issue, someone who had criticised the coupon distribution system was baldly compared to Göring who was supposed to have said once that the Dutch didn't need many coupons as they did everything on the black market anyway. On the same page sympathy is shown for the Indonesians who were fighting for self-government. The Netherlands was at that time involved in a colonial struggle against the independence of the Dutch East Indies. The hostilities against the Indonesian nationalists were euphemistically called 'police operations', which could not disguise the fact that it was chiefly the Dutch left-wing which supported the struggle for independence.

But total independence, that was going a bit far for *Mandril*. The Indonesian question was initially viewed objectively. In the first issue of the second year (October 1949) there was a bantering piece about Frans Goedhart, involved in politics through *Het Parool*, who had raised questions in the Parliament about Dutch atrocities in Indonesia.[12] *Mandril*'s editors had also seen photographs of atrocities committed by the Indonesians. 'Why, we wondered, doesn't Mr Frank Goedhart raise questions about that as well? We don't want to shield cruel Dutchmen. We consider cruel Dutchmen just as revolting as cruel Indonesians. But why, we kept thinking, does the left-wing fraternity see only Dutch

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atrocities and the right-wing fraternity only Indonesian cruelty?

Reports on the then recently begun arms race between East and West were printed next to an editorial declaration of principle which promised that *Mandril* would publish only original cartoons by Dutch artists, and still on the same page, a passage printed in Chinese-looking characters and thus completely unintelligible, under which the editors had written 'these are the imputations of the sender, whose indignation the attentive reader of the above will wholeheartedly share'. The 'Chinese' text was reprinted now and then in subsequent issues, always with a new editorial comment underneath, beginning along the lines of: as the reader himself can read...*Mandril* wanted to be a satirical magazine, after all. The 'On dit...on dat' column was full of little contributions like this, followed up as likely as not by articles written under a pseudonym, liberally furnished with vignettes, cartoons and even photographic collages. Some contributors specialised in one area, Ellen Waller, for example, who reviewed films, and Hans van Derksen who always wrote about Paris.[13] Mathieu Smedts, correspondent on the Catholic daily *de Volkskrant*, wrote about London under the droll byline 'Big Pennevruchten' (Big Penmanship), while others produced short stories, often absurdist in tone and theme. Henri Knap and Eduard Elias commented on current affairs. It is the contributions in this

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last category which generally exude a liberal, not to say libertine, atmosphere as long as the subject is politics. Heedless of public opinion Elias and Knap gave their views of the world around them, concluding with great regularity that it was the Netherlands' bourgeois mentality that was its downfall. The word bourgeois as negative qualification was so popular in those days that it makes you wonder where the actual members of the bourgeoisie were hiding out.

Mandril was a critical magazine, but most of the articles were optimistic in tone, expecially when dealing with subjects from modern life. In a long article on the future of television it was concluded with a certain alacrity that 'something of the American television fever' would spread all over the world.[14]

There are a few constants in the 44 issues of *Mandril* which were published. The magazine was, as already stated, liberal, and the editors did not baulk at airing widely differing opinions on political matters. Furthermore, moralism and moral decline were ironically treated. In 1987 Charles Boost remarked in an interview that the magazine had a dubious reputation in conservative circles. And the Catholic *Volkskrant* even refused to place advertisements for *Mandril*.[15] Political opinions in the magazine were more often of a progressive than of a conservative tint. Communism remains the exception. You couldn't campaign strongly enough against that. The communists had played an important part in resisting the German occupying

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forces, admittedly, but *Mandril* was just as anti-communist as the newspaper *Het Parool*, which had its origins in the resistance.

To summarise, it can be observed that *Mandril* made an important contribution in many ways to the modernisation of format in journalism. Explicit attention was given to the cartoon, in the editors' own words, as the telling of a topical anecdote in a single picture, the column, the introduction of features about ordinary people, a good butcher for example, and following the lead of *The New Yorker*, the inclusion of short stories too. That's how Henry James and James Thurber achieved fame.[16] But in Dutch journalism, even a well researched story about which cafes to visit or an account of the nightlife round Amsterdam's Leidseplein, and all the other stories about modern pleasure-seeking people, could be regarded as revolutionary. And perhaps most important of all was the cleverly chosen mix of politics and culture which made the magazine both interesting and innovatory, and above all the satirical tone in which this was all committed to paper.[17]

As innovatory as *Mandril* may have been from a journalistic viewpoint, it was all the more conservative from an artistic point of view. So it appears on closer inspection.
It is striking that in articles about literature and the visual arts, which constituted a considerable proportion of the copy, aesthetic criteria seldom or never played a role. Interest or

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lack of interest in books or exhibitions which had been extensively reviewed in other media often had an ideological background. In order to prove such a theory we must not only look at what was printed in *Mandril*, but also at what was not printed. We must also know the 'symbolic value' or reputation of particular persons or subjects described. Let me begin with an innocuous example. Whenever something had been written by Hans Gomperts in *Het Parool*, where he was a journalist, or in the anti-communist periodical *Libertinage*, which he had co-founded, it was always given attention in *Mandril*. Even if there was something in *Libertinage* worthy of criticism, this criticism was accompanied by the emphatic assurance that *Libertinage* was the best Dutch literary periodical. And if in one of his articles Gomperts mentioned the metropolitan artists' cafe Eijlders: 'Pseudo-artistic meeting places like these', wrote Elias, 'continue to arouse certain people's fury'. All becomes clearer when you know that Eijlders was the place where the communist-oriented Reflex group, later the Cobra group, held their meetings. And malicious little remarks like that also become rather more understandable when you connect *Mandril*'s many denigrating comments about subsidised artists with the world from which Elias, Knap, van der Molen and friends came. They were journalists, copywriters, businessmen or travelling salesmen who did art on the side rather than full-time. As soon as they get onto the subject of

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art, it's like reading a Catholic missionary magazine from the 1920s.

In the third issue of *Mandril*, Joop Hardy wrote that the characteristic aim of art after Cézanne and Van Gogh was to give form to 'one's vision of reality' rather than to 'what is felt or experienced'. Hardy complained that art had turned its back on nature, which 'gives millions of people the impression that a glorious new age of art' has dawned. 'This belief in abstract painting demonstrates rather, to put it mildly, a childlike naïvety'.

Hardy describes art which takes up a position independent of nature as 'bleak and cold' and 'having as little substance or imagination as its abstract name'. In the seventh issue, Hardy says of the French painter André Derain, who had collaborated with the Germans during the Second World War: 'Art and politics, however, are two separate, unreconcilable worlds, and whatever one might think of Derain's political convictions, he remains one of the greatest living painters. His exhibition is an oasis in the desert which the art world has become since the outbreak of the abstract or non-figurative painting epidemic'.

It goes without saying that the alarm is raised in the July issue of 1949 when some 'bourgeois' city councillor or other has a couple of paintings removed from the exhibition of Kees van Dongen, whose work is neither abstract or

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experimental. It's a free country, that seems to be *Mandril*'s attitude. However, the same freedom does not seem to be granted to Mr Sandberg, director of the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam.

Elias' attack on Sandberg in his 'Noten op mijn zang' column was still relatively innocuous. In the *Beurs- en Nieuwsberichten* (Stock Exchange and News Reports) newspaper, published in Willemstad, Elias had read a written account of an interview that Sandberg had given on Antillean radio. It was not so surprising that Elias read *Beurs- en Nieuwsberichten* since he had lived on Curaçao as a journalist and head of the government press office in the late nineteen-thirties and the early years of the war, like *Mandril* co-founder Frits van der Molen, who had been a diplomat there at that time. The latter was co-founder of the periodical *De Stoep* in Willemstad in 1940.

Sandberg said in the interview that he encouraged painters to draw like children, that produced beautiful art which he was eager to exhibit in the Stedelijk Museum. At the end of the interview he delivered an ironical swipe at 'Old Moaners': through his word play on apes and old moaners who sit scratching away behind glass it was obvious that he was making fun of the Mandril club. And that's also how Elias took it. It had the desired effect, as Elias lost his sense of humour and discrimination and ended his column with 'to publicly brand us Old Moaners. How dare they!' The Sandberg question, as we may

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call it, had a broad political background, of which Sandberg was only the symbol. Elias wrote how dare *they*, not how dare *he*, after all.

During the war Sandberg had been active in the artists' resistance. And even before liberation it was feared that Sandberg and his group had developed a 'secret strategy', as the Dutch Secret Service later called it, to reform the Netherlands along communist lines after the war. In order to confirm the existence of such a masterplan, Secret Service agents were set to work sifting through clandestine and illegal newspapers and magazines. They went through the magazine *De Vrije Kunstenaar* (The Free Artist) with a fine toothcomb, for example, to see what it had printed during the war, even doing research on variant spelling in order to find out the names of anonymous or pseudonymous contributors.

Every remark which could be interpreted as a reference to a potential post-occupation communist state was copied down by the Secret Service in confidential reports. Articles, posters and interviews which had any connection with the Cobra artists and Sandberg were checked for links with the suspected plot.[18] Sandberg was an object of suspicion in this respect until the late 1950s. His openly practised communist convictions were directly linked with the art which he exhibited in the Stedelijk Museum. Figurative artists felt themselves to have been thrown by Sandberg onto the rubbish heap of history, and

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compared him to 'a nazi culture dictator'.

Elias and Knap ascribed everything that was squalid and nasty in the visual arts to Sandberg. When the famous Cobra exhibition was held in the Stedelijk in November 1949, *Mandril*'s editors declared in a short article that they wouldn't be going to have a look. (The much-talked-of *Stijl* international exhibition of 1951 didn't even get a mention). *Mandril*'s only comment was 'that it was all Appelsauce à la Corneille to us'. In the same issue Henri Knap nevertheless devotes two pages to the Cobra exhibition, apparently without having been there. That was hardly necessary since his conclusions were strictly ideological anyway. According to Knap the Cobra artists had an evidently nihilistic intellectual life. 'They pollute everything of value which they come across, even Titian reproductions', hereby referring to the beard which Cobra poet and collagist Jan Elburg had glued onto Titian's Venus in his entry to the Cobra exhibition. 'When they still can't sublimate their anal-eroticism they use words like "shit". (...) It is no coincidence that Gerrit Kouwenaar [one of the Cobra poets, HR] seizes on the Indian and his peace pipe as a symbol: that nihilist Hitler didn't get any further than Karl May's schoolboy tales either'.

But to Knap the worst of all was that the city council had afforded Sandberg the opportunity to make this sort of filth public. Knap called unequivocally on the Amsterdam council to

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take measures. A superfluous demand, since a couple of weeks earlier Elburg's disputed collage (the one with the beard) had been removed from the museum by order of the council's director of culture. When a letter appears in the next issue complaining that Sandberg had been rudely treated, Knap reacts with the contrived theory: 'What I foretold has now been proved true by this reaction: whoever points a finger at Mr Sandberg and his friends and kindred spirits is lumped by them with the conservatives'. Perhaps in order to even up the score a little, Knap shortly afterwards wrote a strident article in which he argued that it was not nude swimming itself but the ban on it which led to moral decline. It was clear that the editors did not want to be saddled with a conservative image outside the field of art. When a short story by the ancient writer Alexander Cohen was printed, the editors found it necessary to state in a box beside it that they did not share all of his 'convictions'. That was an odd remark, as from the beginning of his journalistic career in the nineteenth century until the present, Cohen had evolved from anarchist to reactionary. In a letter to Boost, Cohen wrote that he had an aversion to 'bestial cannibalistic communism'.

The editors themselves blamed Sandberg because he exhibited 'false art', in order to foist his depraved ideas on the general public with the aid of state subsidies. In the vanguard of this campaign against Sandberg was J.M. Prange, art

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editor of *Het Parool*. He is a fine example of someone who linked art with ideology in almost every article. Many of his ideas are almost literally reproduced in *Mandril*. J. Hardy's theory about abstract artists turning their back on nature, for example, was expressed in almost exactly the same words by Prange, first in *Het Parool* and later summarised once more in his polemic pamphlet, published in 1957: *De God Hai-Hai en rabarber; Met het kapmes door de jungle der moderne kunst* (*The God Hai-Hai and rhubarb; with a machete through the jungle of modern art*).

On the very first page of his rabble-rousing lament Prange says that for him contemporary visual art has become 'the Hiroshima of art'. What he finds particularly objectionable is what he names the Cézanne complex; 'the terror of missing the boat and not recognising or even completely overlooking a movement in art or a particular artist'. This terror leads to the favouring of 'the new' at the expense of originality and genius. And where that newness led had been aired often enough in the popular newspaper *De Telegraaf*. Prange quotes with alacrity from an article in this newspaper, which made it clear that was not only the enemies and despisers of abstract art who could not recognise the genius of the new: in the Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum a painting by Paul Klee had been hung upside down by mistake. Prange ended by printing a picture by a three-year-old boy next to a drawing by Piet Ouborg. His caption can

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be imagined.

Prange had such a loathing of modern abstract art because in it nature is eliminated, the negative comes to the fore, with the result that the moderns take the road of 'a meaningless esthetic and decorative playing with materials, colours and shapes, which no longer form a means but an end in themselves'. Art must choose a higher moral aim, that is the implication here.

Prange calls modern art 'smutty': 'We sought Beauty - they showed us a distorted illusion: we sought Art and they offered us manifestos; we sought Truth and found lies and treachery'. A few lines further he claims: 'We are the avant-garde, for we have liberated ourselves from the bigoted abstract academism of the musea and of official art: modernism'. The fact that Prange never voiced his opinions in *Mandril* himself is due to the explicit anti-communist remarks ('Moscow-controlled abstract artists') which studded his *Parool* articles, and from which the *Mandril* editors wished to be exempt.[19]

In July 1950 Henry Knap arrived at a couple of enlightening pronouncements in a long article in *Mandril* about the intelligibility of art. The middle-class, even its non-bourgeois members, and the artist are alienated from each other because they no longer recognise each other's view of reality. For that reason Knap was against taking schoolchildren on tours of musea where unintelligible art was on show. The inexplicable

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should not be explained away, for that only leads impressionable young people into the wrong paths, 'and tempts them via artistic nihilism to do away with moral values'. Art is not about the difference between realism and surrealism but between *inspired* and *premeditated* art. Knap had a concrete example of the latter. In 1950 Piet Ouborg was awarded the Jacob Maris Prize for his abstract drawing 'Father and Son', which according to Knap had a decadent nihilistic atmosphere. Prange had said the same thing earlier in *Het Parool*, but Knap didn't mention the fact. Bien étonné de se trouver ensemble, the art critics of the communist paper *De Waarheid* frequently hit the roof whenever yet another example of 'artistic nihilism' had been sighted.[20]

As regards literature, only conservative observations are to be found in *Mandril*, at least where Dutch literature is concerned. In connection with literary criticism, for example, it is scornfully remarked that this only extends praise to experimental writers. 'The "story with a beginning, a middle and an end" counts for nothing here'. Several storytellers were named as examples of those who were regarded as too superficial by the 'literary brigade'. In the last issue of the first year Elias took up the cudgels for the storytellers of literature, such as Jan de Hartog.[21] Because they are widely read, the critics will consider them worthless, he sneered. 'The others resort to a pretentious intellectuality which is simply

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unreadable'.

In November 1949 (the month in which the Cobra exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam opened) Henri Knap sounded a clarion call to authors bidding them to write 'an honest work of hand and brain' 'for us, idiots', instead of burdening the world with books which enlarge on life in the 'gutter' or novels describing lesbian love affairs. It brought Knap to the conclusion that art ought to be a craft, exercised by craftsmen '- not by self-styled demi-gods'.

If we bring to mind here the definition of 'ideology' as expressed by Revel - a mixture of strong emotions and simple ideas which is expressed in a form of behaviour - we cannot do otherwise than conclude that Knap put this definition into practice by presenting himself as a literary critic with all sorts of opinions which had little to do with literature. 'Give us books in which people come to life, with whom we can identify'.(...) That is what we ask of you, that is what we demand, we, the customers who are always right'. Just as with the invective against abstract art, the literary opinions in *Mandril* can be interpreted as a plea for *low culture* for 'the man in the street'. In a short 'Editorial plan', which was sent to potential contributors just before the appearance of the first issue, the editors stated it loud and clear: 'The contents will definitely not be aimed exclusively at

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highbrows'.[22]

The *Mandril* editors, especially Elias and Knap, were strongly opposed to government subsidisation of art, as subsidies went to the wrong artists - for 'wrong' read 'communist'. Although *Mandril* never spoke of the communist peril, it seems likely that the magazine introduced not only journalistic innovation but also a surreptitious version of American McCarthyism into the Netherlands.

The preference which *Mandril* displayed for low culture and humorous literature explains the choice of contributors of all genres. The editors conducted a campaign against élitist art. The question of whether this was Catholic, Protestant or otherwise was of secondary importance. Cutting across these boundaries led to the hitherto undeveloped territory of modern American music, American comics, films and television.[23] In so doing the editors were swimming against the stream of the prevalent post-war fear of mass culture. Communism and national socialism had shown what mass culture led to, and so there was a strong need after 1945 for *high culture*, culture with an educational purpose in the fight against the corrupting powers of the political currents which until recently had so disrupted Europe. In this context *Mandril* can be described as a modern medium; the editors propagated light-hearted art, often called *entertainment*, which was regarded as perniciously American and was therefore classed as a danger to the nation's moral

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standards. In the 'editorial plan' 'fine writing' is condemned in favour of 'facts, facts and more facts'. There could be no question, therefore, of moral rearmament. It was the globalising effect of American mass culture in particular which was seen in pillarised circles as a threat to their own identity. Admittedly, the Americans had liberated Europe from the Nazis, putting the Marshall Plan into action from 1948, from which the Netherlands had derived considerable economic profit, but their culture was regarded with distrust. In intellectual circles particularly there was great distrust of film and television.[24] This distrust was lost on *Mandril*.

In the last issue of *Mandril*'s second year the aim of this 'journal d'esprit' was stated as follows: 'a periodical packed full with writing and drawings by Dutchmen of all persuasions'. Most of *Mandril*'s editors and contributors worked for *Elseviers Weekblad* or *Het Parool*, a remarkable combination, this conservative weekly and this in many ways progressive newspaper. What united them was their aversion to communism. In *Elseviers Weekblad* and *Het Parool* this aversion was openly referred to: in *Mandril* this political aversion took the form of art criticism.*

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[1] Michael Schudschon, *Discovering the News; A social History of American Newspapers*, New York 1978; Gaye Tuchman, 'Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newsmen's Notions of Objectivity', in: Howard Tumber, *News; A Reader*, New York 1999, p. 297.

[2] Jean-Francois Revel, *La Conaissance inutile*, Parijs 1988, p. 164. Het citaat gaat als volgt: 'l'idéologie est un mélange d'émotions fortes et d'idées simples accordées à un comportement.'

[3] Gerard Mulder & Paul Koedijk maken in *Lées die krant! Geschiedenis van het naoorlogse Parool 1945-1970*, Amsterdam 1996 bij vlagen een uitzondering op die regel, bijvoorbeeld waar zij op p. 379-382 over de relatie tussen *Het Parool* en *Tirade* schrijven. Over de verwevenheid tussen *Het Parool* en *Mandril* daarentegen schrijven ze geen woord.

[4] Arend Lijphart, *The politics of Accommodation : pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angelos, 1968, [passim]. Lijphart speaks about 'blocs' instead of 'pillars', which is more familiar with the Dutch equivalent 'verzuiling'.

[5] Hans Mulder, 'De mislukte poging om in Nederland de humor van The New Yorker te introduceren; Mandril, maanblad voor mensen, 1948-1953', in: *Vrij Nederland* 9-6-1979. Nog voordat het eerste nummer verscheen, schreef Frits van der Molen in een brief, d.d. 22-7-1948, aan Jan Greshoff: 'Al heel lang ben ik bezig een blad als de New Yorker in Nederlandse trant in elkaar te zetten.' Letterkundig Museum, Den Haag.

[6] *The Complete Book of Covers from The New Yorker 1925-1989*, with a foreword by John Updike, New York 1989.

[7] Lisa Kuitert, *Het uiterlijk behang; reeksen in de Nederlandse literatuur 1945-1996*, [deel] 2, Amsterdam 1997, p. 119. *Het Nieuwsblad voor de boekhandel* maakt in elk geval in 1951 melding van deze slagzin. De 'Mandrilleurs' E. Elias en A. Duif stelden de bloemlezing samen *Lachen is Leven; een bloemlezing in woord en beeld van Nederlandse humor van 1883 tot 1958*, Utrecht 1958.

[8] Brief Frits van der Molen aan Jan Greshoff, d.d. 29-10-1948, Letterkundig Museum, Den Haag.

[9] Herbert J. Altschull, *From Milton to McLuhan: The Ideas behind American Journalism*, New York - Londen 1990, met name hoofdstuk 2 'Ideology and the Missing Theory of News' en hoofdstuk 3 'Philosophy and Some Fundamental Questions' zijn in deze instructief. Matthwe Arnold called *journalism* 'literature in a hurry', cited in: T.S. Matthews, *The Sugar Pill; An Essay on Newspapers*, London 1958, p. 11.

[10] Ton Zeelenberg, 'Het mysterie Elegance; Was zij werkelijk een ondergeschoven oorlogskind?', in: *Elegance* 50(1993)12, december, p. 46-64; Hans Renders, 'Minstens vijftig jaar Elegance', in: *NRC Handelsblad* 19-11-1993; Joan Hemels en Renée Vegt, *Het Geïllustreerde Tijdschrift in Nederland; Bron van kennis en vermaak, lust voor het oog, Bibliografie*, Deel II: 1945-1995, Amsterdam 1997, p. 452-458.

[11] De laatste nummers van *Mandril* zijn ongenummerd en ongedateerd verschenen. Dat verklaart waarom in diverse publicaties tegenstrijdige

informatie wordt gegeven over hoeveel nummers er in totaal zijn uitgekomen en wanneer het doek definitief viel. Zo schrijft Henk van Gelder dat in totaal 48 nummers zijn verschenen, 'Mandril zat langs de kant en bekeek het goede', in: *De Tijd* 7-8-1987, p. 18-21. Erik Slagter beweert in zijn *Tekst en Beeld; Cobra en Vijftig, een bibliografie*, Tielt 1986, p. 34, dat het laatste nummer van *Mandril* in 1952 uitkwam.

[12] Voor Frans Goedhart en zijn politieke loopbaan in relatie met *Het Parool*, zie: Gerard Mulder & Paul Koedijk, *Lées die krant! Geschiedenis van het naoorlogse Parool 1945-1970*, Amsterdam 1996, met name hoofdstuk 3 'Politieke vernieuwing'.

[13] In de biografie van Ellen Waller door Sandra van Beek, *De grote illusie; Leven en liefde van Ellen en Gerry Waller*, Breda 2000, wordt haar medewerking aan *Mandril* niet genoemd. Een van de vele auteurs die onder pseudoniem meewerkten, was Wilhelmina J.T. van Aggelen. Als Ch. de Vos publiceerde zij in het decembernummer van 1949 een kort verhaal, brief Ch. de Vos aan Ch. Boost, d.d. 16-1-1950 en brief Ch. Boost aan Ch. de Vos, d.d. 24-1-1950, Letterkundig Museum, Den Haag.

[14] *Mandril* 1(1948)1, oktober, p. 22-24.

[15] Charles Boost in 'Mandril zat langs de kant en bekeek het gedoe', *De Tijd* 7 -8-1987.

[16] Brendan Gill, *Here at the New Yorker*, Londen 1990 (1ste druk 1975).

[17] In *Vrij Nederland* 9-6-1979 schreef Hans Mulder 'De mislukte poging om in Nederland de humor van The New Yorker te introduceren; Mandril, maandblad voor mensen, 1948-1953', p. 3-20. In dit artikel staan talloze citaten verzameld waaruit blijkt dat ook tijdgenoten *Mandril* als een journalistiek vernieuwend blad beschouwden. Frits van der Molen heeft lang rond gelopen met het plan 'de geschiedenis van deze pionierstijd van de Nederlandse journalistiek' te schrijven.

[18] Zie voor deze kwestie en het BVD-dossier over Sandberg: Hans Renders, *Braak, Een kleine mooie revolutie tussen Cobra en Atonaal; Met een facsimile-uitgave van het tijdschrift*, Amsterdam 2000, p. 38-44 en Hans Mulder, *Kunst in crisis en bezetting; Een onderzoek naar de verhouding van Nederlandse kunstenaars in de periode 1930-1945*, Utrecht/Antwerpen 1978, p. 292-303.

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UNION MAGAZINES' COVERAGE OF THE NAFTA CONTROVERSY BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

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A paper submitted to the Magazine Division of AEJMC for consideration for presentation at the annual convention in Washington, D.C., in August 2001.

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UNION MAGAZINES' COVERAGE OF THE NAFTA CONTROVERSY BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

SHORT ABSTRACT

The 1993 congressional consideration of NAFTA drew intense labor lobbying. Simultaneously, union magazines served as advocacy tools, attacking the pact and urging members to take political action. Coverage focused on job-related critiques, especially predictions of a job drain to Mexico and potentially lower wages for U.S. workers. Much less attention went to environmental and other perceived flaws of NAFTA. Language in those articles was frequently more heated, even inflammatory, than in the mainstream media.

UNION MAGAZINES' COVERAGE OF THE NAFTA CONTROVERSY BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL

LONG ABSTRACT

The 1993 congressional consideration of NAFTA drew intense labor lobbying. Unions took a variety of steps to motivate members to contact their representatives and senators, including use of union magazines as advocacy and informational tools that attacked the pact and called on members to take political action. Coverage focused on job-related critiques of NAFTA, especially predictions of a job drain to Mexico and potentially lower wages for U.S. workers. The magazines devoted much less space to environmental and other perceived flaws of NAFTA. Language in those articles was frequently more heated, even inflammatory, than in the mainstream media. Editorial coverage was severely unbalanced against NAFTA, reflecting a belief that readers of such advocacy publications don't expect the same type of fairness and balance found in mainstream press. After the congressional vote, union magazines took a brief parting shot and then turned their attention – and space – to other issues.

Union Magazines' Coverage of NAFTA

Introduction

In 1993, organized labor in the United States and Canada heatedly but unsuccessfully fought approval of the North American Free Trade Agreement by the Canadian Parliament and the U.S. Congress. In the United States, unions used their magazines to inform members about what they considered serious flaws in the pact and to motivate those members to vigorously oppose it in communications with their congressional delegations, rallies, letters to newspaper editors and other public actions. Union magazines' coverage focused principally on job-related critiques of the pact, especially predictions of a job drain to Mexico and potentially lower wages for U.S. workers.

A content analysis and a review of four major union magazines show that other issues that resonated strongly among the general public in the United States and Canada – particularly environmental –received substantially less space in labor press discussions of NAFTA. Columns and articles intended for Canadian members included another issue: nationalism and national autonomy. Those magazines were published by the United Auto Workers (*Solidarity*), International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (*The Machinist*), United Food & Commercial Workers (*UFCW Action*) and United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America (*Carpenter*).

The Political Battle

When the U.S. House of Representatives approved NAFTA in November 1993, it represented a major political defeat for organized labor.
Union Magazines' Coverage of NAFTA

Unions had lobbied Congress heavily to reject the pact, emphasizing most strongly their assertion that U.S. and multinational employers would eliminate an immense number of jobs – particularly in manufacturing – in the United States and transfer them to Mexico, where wages and benefits would be significantly lower, occupational safety and health standards significantly laxer and workers' rights – including the right to organize – would be significantly restricted. Critics also argued that NAFTA would put downward pressure on job safety and health standards and enforcement of those standards for workers within the United States.

The lobbying's focus on employment-related aspects of NAFTA made political sense. An analysis of the breakdown of House and Senate voting patterns on NAFTA showed that "expected job gains/losses, the presence of organized labor and political ideology as represented by political party, were significant predictors of a legislator's vote" (Kahane, 1996).

However, to broaden their focus, develop alliances and win anti-NAFTA votes, unions also lobbied on issues beyond the core of their mission, particularly human rights abuses and looser environment standards in Mexico. That made political sense as well. The same post-vote analysis found that NAFTA's anticipated environmental impact was "somewhat important" in explaining how lawmakers voted. (Kahane, 1996).

Although the unions threatened to withhold future campaign contributions and endorsements from lawmakers who supported NAFTA, the NAFTA showdown came at particularly awkward time for organized labor. Their opposition had crystallized under Republican President George Bush, whose administration had negotiated the pact, but the union-backed new president, Democrat Bill Clinton, was a NAFTA supporter, and Democrats still controlled the House. As the deadline for the House vote neared, Clinton even got publicly angry with the unions, accusing them on *Meet the Press* of using "naked pressure" against NAFTA (Nichols, 1993).

For the labor press, that required some care in writing about Clinton. For example, the November 1993 *Machinist* carried a front-page article, "Clinton Forms Partnership With Workers and Unions." The beginning reported on speeches by Clinton and Labor Secretary Robert Reich at the recent AFL-CIO convention. Not until the 16th paragraph did NAFTA appear, starting a three-paragraph critique by AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland. NAFTA then disappeared for two more paragraphs, only to reemerge on an inside page where the article concluded.

Even after the November 1992 election, efforts were made to link NAFTA to the recently ended administration. Bush's name appears four times in the text of a six-paragraph December 1992 *Solidarity* article, for example. In addition, the bottom of the page urges readers in large type: "SAY 'NO' TO BUSH'S NAFTA NOW!"

Mission of the Labor Press

While organized labor's most intense anti-NAFTA activities took place in traditional lobbying forums, unions used their internal publications to both inform their members about the topic and to generate grassroots activity: encouraging readers to call, write and visit their lawmakers to urge opposition to NAFTA. While members of Congress may rarely read union magazines, they are more likely to notice letters from constituents who do read those magazines and who act on what their union officials say.

That's consistent with the purposes of union publications, purposes that are different from – and supplement – those of traditional general-circulation newspapers and magazines. True, they inform readers of what their unions and leaders are doing – presumably for the members – and tell how union dues and PAC contributions are spent and what activities their members are engaged in. Studies have categorized their content as: education and information, including economic issues, labor and social problem; politics, legislation and public affairs; general news about labor, the union and industry; human interest articles about union members; and entertainment. (Perline, 1969; Lyons, 1969; American Newspaper Guild, 1939).

For unions, their publications historically have served as advocacy and motivational tools that lobby their members and their families on political, social and cultural topics.

> "If the union members are to get the most out of their organization they must make themselves effective in the political field. This means the union organ must supply them with political and economic news

> affecting the general interests of labor.... In this way, the individual member is supplied with information which is either left out or wrongly presented by the commercial press. Thus the union organ enables its members to rally with the millions of others in the labor movement to defeat inimical legislation or to work for beneficial legislation." (American Newspaper Guild, 1939).

In that way, union publications bolster the direct lobbying that labor organizations do with members of Congress, the administration in power, Cabinet departments, regulatory agencies and political candidates. They also augment the campaign support flowing from union-affiliated PACs to candidates and party committees. As the president of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees union once put it, "It's the base of labor's pyramid that counts. This is where the latent political power lies." (Cole. 1961).

The labor press in the United States and Canada supplements other sources of information and news for members and their families. That includes reporting on issues that may be overlooked or underreported in mainstream newspapers, magazines and broadcasts, as well as providing alternative interpretations or advocacy perspectives on issues while presenting a vision founded on values that are different from those reflected in "free market" news organs (Fones-Wolf, 2000).

One study of a United Auto Workers weekly newspaper published in Ohio found the "the daily newspaper, local television and the Toledo *Union Journal* were the most important sources of political information for the UAW rank-and-file with 53 percent, 39 percent and 29 percent respectively

relying primarily on these media. The union paper, however, was the most trusted medium among the workers." (Lyons, 1969).

And while readers have a right to expect accuracy, they don't expect to see the mainstream press' values of fairness and balance in such advocacy-oriented publications (Freedman, 2000; *Industry Week*, 1975).

In a book published four decades ago, three union publication editors wrote that:

> "Labor papers reflect the widening horizons of workers' interests. The papers themselves have played an important part in achieving this expansion of interest. Their pages reflect the unanimity of conviction that workers' welfare is inseparable from community well-being, national prosperity and international peace. They insist that the fact of union membership, far from detaching a worker from community responsibilities, rather strengthens that bond.
>
> In this sense, labor papers make no pretense at "dispassionate" or "impartial" editing. They acknowledge and define their point of view as being that of the union member and then present their accounts of pending legislation, collective bargaining, political developments and economic fluctuations accordingly. They admit the purpose of agitating as well as educating. (Cole, 1961).

Three decades later, *Solidarity* editor David Elsila described labor media as the "strongest potential alternative provider of information for America's workers." He went on to write, "Since the early 1980s, our job has become even more critical, as government and business have attacked the labor movement with everything from permanent replacements to

economic policies that send work overseas and leave workers back home jobless." (Pizzigati and Solowey, 1992).

Prior Research

Few studies of the U.S. labor press have been published in the peer-reviewed literature for journalism or labor, and those tend to focus more on the history of the labor press rather than what it reports and how. (Fones-Wolf, 2000; Streitmatter, 1999; Duram, 1974; Perline, 1969; Guimary, 1969.) The exceptions include an assessment of how union officials use these publications as leadership tools (Garver, 1958) and what functions rank-and-file members want their labor publications to perform (Schor, 1949). Professional and trade publications for journalists and businesses occasionally deal with these topics, but not in depth or on a consistent basis. (Hoyt, 1983; *Industry Week*, 1975)

Research Questions

Union publications reach and, perhaps influence, tens of millions of U.S. and Canadian households, yet there has been little research done on how they exercise their advocacy and motivational roles. This study helps fill that gap.

Given their mission and priorities, we would expect labor magazines to concentrate their NAFTA-related advocacy on job-related issues such as job retention and wages. Such issues would reverberate strongly with union members as well as union-backed lawmakers. Yet labor unions are

simultaneously lobbying organizations that need to build broader legislative alliances to win support from decision-makers – here, members of Congress – who are more concerned about non-job issues such as the environment.

Therefore, these questions arise:

RQ1: How much relative space did jobs and the environment receive in NAFTA-related stories?

RQ2: How often did union magazines includes calls for their members to take political action in such stories?

RQ3: Given their advocacy purpose, how strident was the language and how provocative were the illustrations in these magazines?

Once NAFTA won ratification, union publications had to move on. That raises an additional question:*

RQ4: Immediately after ratification, how did these magazines cover the vote and the issue?

Method

This content analysis portion of this study is based on issues of *Solidarity* (United Auto Workers), *The Machinist* (International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers) *UFCW Action* (United Food & Commercial Workers) and *Carpenter* (United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners of America) published in the year leading up to the congressional vote.

It involved reviewing and characterizing the editorial content as articles, columns, briefs and statements (including speeches) from September-October (bimonthly) or October (more frequently) 1992 through the U.S. House vote in November 1993. It included editorial content in which NAFTA was the principal topic or a principal topic but excluded passing mentions and letters to the editor.

Most of the editorial content was based on reporting from union headquarters and attendance at union conventions, meetings or events. At times, however, the magazines engaged in a more activist reporting. For example, the April 1993 *Solidarity* included a highly detailed, well-photographed cover story that injected human faces into the debate, the faces of workers at the maquiladoras – factories south of the U.S.-Mexican border – and the workers' families and communities. That article was accompanied by a more typical sidebar with questions and answers about NAFTA. *The Machinist* sent editors to inspect and report about working and environmental conditions, wages and job security at the maquiladoras The result: an April 1993 package of three articles, including "Corporate greed breeds resistance in Mexico."

Articles analyzed were: news and feature articles; briefs of one to three paragraphs; columns and opinion pieces by union officials or outside commentators; and formal statements or speeches by a labor organization or one of its officials. Union publications are less likely than mainstream newspapers and magazines to segregate or clearly delineate pure opinion pieces from those that more closely resemble news or analysis. Nor do

"articles" in union publications shy away from showing a bias or advocacy position.

Three categories of NAFTA-related paragraphs were coded for analysis:

JOBS: Paragraphs that mentioned creation or loss of jobs, wages, job security or type (e.g., skilled, unskilled) of jobs in the United States, Canada and/or Mexico. This category excluded paragraphs if the *only* job-related content involved safety & health, working conditions, living conditions or unionization rights.

ENVIRONMENT: Paragraphs that mentioned air quality or pollution, water quality or pollution, or hazardous wastes or toxic substances in the United States, Canada and/or Mexico.

JOBS/ENVIRONMENT: Paragraphs that mentioned at least one aspect of JOBS and ENVIRONMENT.

Paragraphs that related solely to other NAFTA issues such as free trade, economics, politics, lobbying strategy or nationalism were not coded.

Results

Summary of Findings

The study examined 47 articles from the four union publications. Not surprisingly, most of that NAFTA coverage related directly to the unions' political and economic agenda, with the strongest emphasis on jobs and, in some instances, a secondary emphasis on environmental arguments and other factors in the debate. In total, 280 paragraphs from those articles dealt with jobs, the environment or both.

Many stories called on reader-members to take political action. Editorial content was severely unbalanced against NAFTA proponents. Language used in the publications was frequently less staid and more heated, even inflammatory, than in the mainstream media. And once the debate was over, labor publications took a few parting shots and then moved on.

Research Question Findings

Of 280 paragraphs discussing jobs and the environment examined for Research Question 1, 78.6 percent addressed jobs alone, ranging from a low of 63.2 percent in *Solidarity* to a high of 88.7 percent in *Carpenter*. Overall, 9.3 percent of these paragraphs covered environmental issues, while 12.1 percent of these paragraphs referred to both jobs and environment.

	Solidarity	*Machinist*	*UFCW Action*	*Carpenter*	Total
NAFTA paragraphs dealing with jobs, environment or both	57	96	56	71	280
Jobs paragraphs	63.2%	79.2%	80.3%	88.7%	78.6%
Environment paragraphs	19.3%	11.4%	5.4%	1.4%	9.3%
Jobs & Environment paragraphs	17.5%	9.4%	14.3%	9.8%	12.1%

* Columns may not equal 100% due to rounding.

The findings confirm that union publications focused their NAFTA-related editorial space on job-related issues, paying secondary or cursory attention to the environmental concerns raised by other critics of the trade pact.

The rest of these articles dealt with other aspects of the NAFTA controversy such as politics, lobbying strategy, economic ramifications, international relations and foreign policy, working conditions overseas and free trade. Unlike material aimed primarily at U.S. union members, columns and articles intended for a Canadian audience also included another issue: nationalism and national autonomy.

Addressing Research Question 2, one major goal of the publishers of union magazines – the labor organizations – is to motivate their members to take action. In the political realm, that means motivating them to attend rallies, contact public officials, become involved in endorsed candidates' campaigns, vote against candidates they disagree with and make campaign contributions.

Of 47 NAFTA-related articles in the four magazines during a one-year period, 15 of them, or 31.3 percent, contained a call to action.

For example, an article in the September-October 1992 edition of *Carpenter* urged "workers and their unions (to) work hard to defeat Bush and the NAFTA." The November-December 1993 edition, published on the eve of the House vote, tells how the U.S. labor movement "is pulling out all the stops to beat NAFTA in Congress with petitions, letter-writing, demonstrations – even billboard advertisements."

This call for action appeared in the December 1992 *Solidarity* at the end of the article "They Call It 'Free' Trade but Somebody's Going to Pay": "That's where we come in. We need to build a strong educational campaign with our representatives in Congress to warn them about the jobs than can be lost, and the industries that can be devastated here. Take a few minutes to

write today to your U.S. Representatives and Senators and let them know about your concerns." It included House and Senate addresses.

In the March-April 1992 *UFCW Action*, the article "Going South: Food Jobs Will Hit the Highway If Trade Agreement Gets Wheels" ended with a passionate plea: "UFCW members, make your voices heard: Let's put the brakes on NAFTA until all workers can ride to prosperity." The January-February 1993 *UFCW Action* reported on a 33-city, seven-week "educational caravan" through California in which union, environmental and community leaders used the California Economic Earthquake Express to hold rallies, draw media attention, build public interest and "spread the truth" about NAFTA.

Research Question 3 addresses the stridency and provocative nature of the language and illustrations used in these articles.

Fairness and balance are two keystones of mainstream news coverage. (Mencher, 2000), but that's not the case in advocacy publications such as union magazines. Story fairness can be defined as the presence or paraphrased or quoted assertions by sources supporting all sides on a controversy. And balance can be defined as how equally those assertions are treated in length and placement within an article (Fico, 1999).

Although some articles in these editions did summarize the arguments and assertions of NAFTA backers, such pro-NAFTA assertions received comparatively little space and came under immediately attack in the rest of the article.

Here's a sample: "Labor Gears Up Fight Against NAFTA" (*UFCW Action*, November-December 1993), allocated one sentence in nine

paragraphs to the pro-NAFTA side – although in a loaded tone – and then directly undermined that position: "NAFTA proponents – including U.S.-based multinational corporations, Republican congressional leaders and Wall Street investors – say that the pact would spur U.S. job expansion. But studies by research groups show that at least 500,000 U.S. manufacturing jobs were shifted to Mexico during the 1980s, and another 500,000 would be lost during the 1990s under NAFTA."

Similarly, *Solidarity* ran a question-and-answer article titled "Understanding NAFTA" in April 1993. One excerpt:

> Q. What does NAFTA promise?
>
> A. Supporters say it will give Mexico's economy a big shot in the arm, leading to higher living standards and demand for U.S. goods. That increased demand is supposed to create jobs here.
>
> Q. What do NAFTA's critics say?
>
> A. That it won't work, because companies will continue to pay low wages and ignore environmental laws in their search for quick profits. Mexican families, who have an annual per-capita average income under $3,000, can hardly afford to feed and house themselves, much less buy U.S. products."

The Machinist devoted half a page in August 1993 to lining up pro-NAFTA arguments, then shooting them down under the headline "Ten big NAFTA lies." A representative excerpt:

> "(5) Lie. It's better to lose jobs to Mexico than to Asia. NOT! No doubt there are some jobs that would go to Asia if there were no low

> wage alternative in Mexico. But it is just as likely that NAFTA will divert Asian (and European) investment to Mexico that otherwise would have come into the U.S. and created jobs here."

There are differences in tone and writing style from publication and publication – and thus from union to union -- in the degree of stridency of language. Among the four, *Carpenter* was most awash in the use of hot words and phrases. For example, "Free Trade Agreement: Disaster that Doesn't Need to Happen," in the September-October 1992 issue crammed "potential disaster," "major multinational corporations and big businesses," "lax environmental regulations" and "highly secret negotiations" into seven paragraphs.

Readers may not differentiate between columns, news articles, editorials and official statements of position, although the heat of rhetoric may vary from genre to genre.

One illustration came in the November-December 1992 *Carpenter*, which printed a lengthy excerpt from a Canadian Labour Conference (CLC) anti-NAFTA statement. With 13 paragraphs in English and 13 in French, the statement covered almost two full pages of the magazine under the headline "NAFTA, 'Tain't Free/C'est Moche, l'ALENA" with the subhead "Blatant Transfer of Power to Corporate Boardrooms." Although laid out like regular articles in the same issue, the only identification of its origin in English and French was "excerpted from a statement by the CLC."

The tenor of the text was also rich in rhetoric, much of it class-oriented. It used such phrases as "work in solidarity with labour and progressive organizations," 'tie the hands of government," "humanizing

corporate policy," "domestic and international corporate agenda," "corporate profits" and "working people are actually worse off today."

Editorial content in *Carpenter* that was aimed at Canadian members used heated language in its coverage of the national autonomy and nationalism aspect of the debate, with lines like these in its September-October 1993 issue: "They hand the economic sovereignty of the three countries over to U.S.-based transnational corporations." Another article in the same issue linked NAFTA to the existing Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and asserted that the objective was to "transfer governmental powers and economic sovereignty to the corporate boardroom."

Some illustrative material, principally photographs and captions, was equally provocative – or motivational. For example, the *Carpenters* CLC statement excerpt "NAFTA, 'Tain't Free" was accompanied by two photos. One shows a man looking at a building under construction with the caption, "Mexican safety regulation permits some hair-raising practices." The other showed a person, implicitly a worker, holding a face mask, above the caption, "Mexican industrial waste can take the wind right out of you."

The seven photos in the April 1993 *Machinist* package included this strongly worded cutline: "Editors witness the squalor and pollution maquiladora workers and their families endure while their absentee company owners take advantage of Mexico's sub-standard labor and pollution laws."

Also in April 1993, *Solidarity* published a cover photo of laid-off Mexican workers and a cover line "Previewing NAFTA: Mexican Workers Have Seen the Future and It Doesn't Work." The five-page package inside included 19 illustrations with both economic and environmental

implications. Among them: an abandoned furniture plant, cattle grazing next to an abandoned Tijuana battery plant "which leaks toxic waste into the ground" and the shacks of "poorly paid workers from foreign-owned maquiladoras." Another picture showed "an open sewer (that) carries waste from industrial plants on a hill high above a workers' neighborhood."

The Vote

With the House outcome uncertain as the November-December 1993 edition of *Carpenter* went to press, the magazine ran a full-page article, "NAFTA: However It Comes Out, the Issue is Teaching North Americans Some Important Lessons." What were those lessons? One was "the larger dimensions of the global economic problem." Another was that "only by raising labor standards in Mexico and beyond will they defend standards at home." The article also criticized the side agreement on labor as "worthless window dressing."

When it came to the 234-200 House vote, it was no great surprise to see that lawmakers who relied principally on labor Political Action Committees in 1992 were more likely to oppose NAFTA, while those who received a large share of donations from business PACs were apt to support it (Steagall, 1996). Another study found that representatives were more likely to oppose NAFTA if their states contained significant labor opposition to free trade (Conybeare & Zinkula, 1996).

As for Research Question 4, just as *Carpenter* had paved the way for its reader-members to accept defeat in its pre-vote hedge article, the magazine tried to make lemonade from lemons right after the vote. The

January-February 1994 issue carried a four-paragraph article, "NAFTA Proves Labor Can Fight – Get Ready for Round Two" buried as the last of three items on the "Washington Report" page. Labor proved it "can wage battle against the most formidable of foes," readers were told, and labor's opposition "brought a high-flying global economic policy down to the grass-roots level." The short article contained no overt threats of retaliation, but the union's treasurer warned that "those who voted wrong are now on notice," adding that members will vote for candidates "who help better the lives of workers, not to those who support legislation that takes away their jobs."

The *Carpenter* article took a look-ahead view in its last paragraph, saying the focus now must be on government retraining and re-employment programs for workers who lose their jobs because of NAFTA.

Other union publications traveled the same road by looking ahead rather than dwelling on the congressional defeat.

The *Machinist* filled the front page of its first post-vote issue (December 1993) with an open letter from IAM President George Kourpias. In it, he thanked the members for their anti-NAFTA activities, including plant and community rallies, media interviews, letters and phone calls to members of Congress and letters to newspaper editors. But instead of calling for revenge against pro-NAFTA supporters, Kourpias pushed in a different direction, urging members to focus on "the huge, unfinished agenda that includes workplace fairness, OSHA reform, tax justice, job creation, education and, of course, our top priority of affordable, accessible health care for all working Americans."

The cover story in the next month's *Machinist* focused on that "unfinished legislative agenda" and included a "1993 Report Card" on the Clinton Administration. Clinton garnered six As, three incompletes and one F – on NAFTA – for an overall B+.

And in *UFCW Action*'s January-February 1994 issue, union President William Wynn took out his anger at the "commercial press" rather than on the lawmakers who supported NAFTA. "The recent NAFTA debate was more than disappointing. It was painful," Wynn wrote in his page-2 column. "Worst of all was the way the press treated the labor movement. Labor was mercilessly bashed, trashed and maligned in countless newspapers, magazines, TV newscasts and radio shows across the country." The closest he came to criticizing Congress was one sentence in which he noted that the majority of Democrats opposed NAFTA "while Republicans and big business were cheerleaders for it."

In fact, after NAFTA took effect on Jan. 2, 1994, union leaders accepted political and economic realities and opted to make the most of reality, including the companion North American Agreement of Labor Cooperation intended to spur programs on such labor issues as minimum wage, wage-and-hour, job safety and child labor. As Keith Mestrich, the director of special projects for the AFL-CIO's food and allied services trades put it, "This is the agreement that we need to work within. We are going to do the best we can to ensure that within that framework, workers' rights are promoted, that a progressive strategy of worker representation is permitted and that the highest standards of occupational safety and health are advanced in all three countries" (Smith, 1994).

Although the labor press has largely turned its attention away from NAFTA and focused instead on other trade issues such as the World Trade Organization, the U.S. trade deficit and permanent normal trade relations for China, NAFTA hasn't disappeared from its pages. NAFTA became a recurring topic in *Solidarity,* for instance, as if to demonstrate that the UAW's warnings have come true. Consider these examples:

"NAFTA fails to protect worker rights," according to an October 1999 report on "third-world wages" as well as a "system of company-friendly unions encouraged by the government," repression of an independent union's strike and the strike's leaders, and failure to enforce U.S. and Mexican labor laws.

The next month, the magazine reported that "corporate greed, U.S. trade policies and the cheap Mexican peso have shot down the jobs of 700 workers" at Master Lock, a UAW-organized padlock plant in Milwaukee. The local's president blamed the greed of the parent company and "trade laws like NAFTA that let them do whatever they want." A four-page cover story in the March 2000 issue linked the layoffs of Master Lock workers to both NAFTA and WTO. And "Rebellion on the border," a two-page photo spread in the September 2000 issue, examined how "the impact of the global economy on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico as NAFTA and other anti-worker policies put downward pressure on the standard of living in both countries."

Conclusion

The use of union magazines to promote political awareness and action is a logical component of organized labor's advocacy role, whether on NAFTA, OSHA, minimum wage or any other public affairs issue. They are acknowledged as house organs that play an advocacy role and carry out that role (Hoyt, 1983).

In fact, these magazines may be an effective way to "educate" members and prompt them to act, even if it's difficult or impossible to accurately measure how effective a call for action is in either participation or political impact. While most members don't routinely attend union meetings, rallies or events, these magazines reach every member's home and are accessible to other people in their family and household.

Unions by definition are advocacy organizations, and their magazines are designed as tools to advance that advocacy. As a result, these magazine aren't expected to adhere to the neutral journalistic standards of fairness and balance – nor did they during the year leading up to the NAFTA vote – any more than a magazine published by a business, environmental, partisan or religious organization or entity.

The findings suggest philosophical and practical questions for labor editors and writers to address. One is the challenge of finding effective ways to present and then counter opposing points of views without sounding heavy-handed or unreasonable, especially on complex public policy issues with multiple points of view. A second challenge is making such issues resonate by focusing on their human ramifications, not simply on dollars and cents.

That leads to a third question, the degree to which a lack of balance and fairness in coverage may turn off their readers. Because the research shows that union members get their political and economic information from a variety of sources, an overly one-sided presentation, coupled with excessively strident advocacy, creates the risk of undermining the credibility of the publication and the willingness of readers to act upon its urgings. In other words, member-readers could reject arguments they know to be misleading, oversimplified or implausibly unbalanced, even when the arguments come in "their" own publications.

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